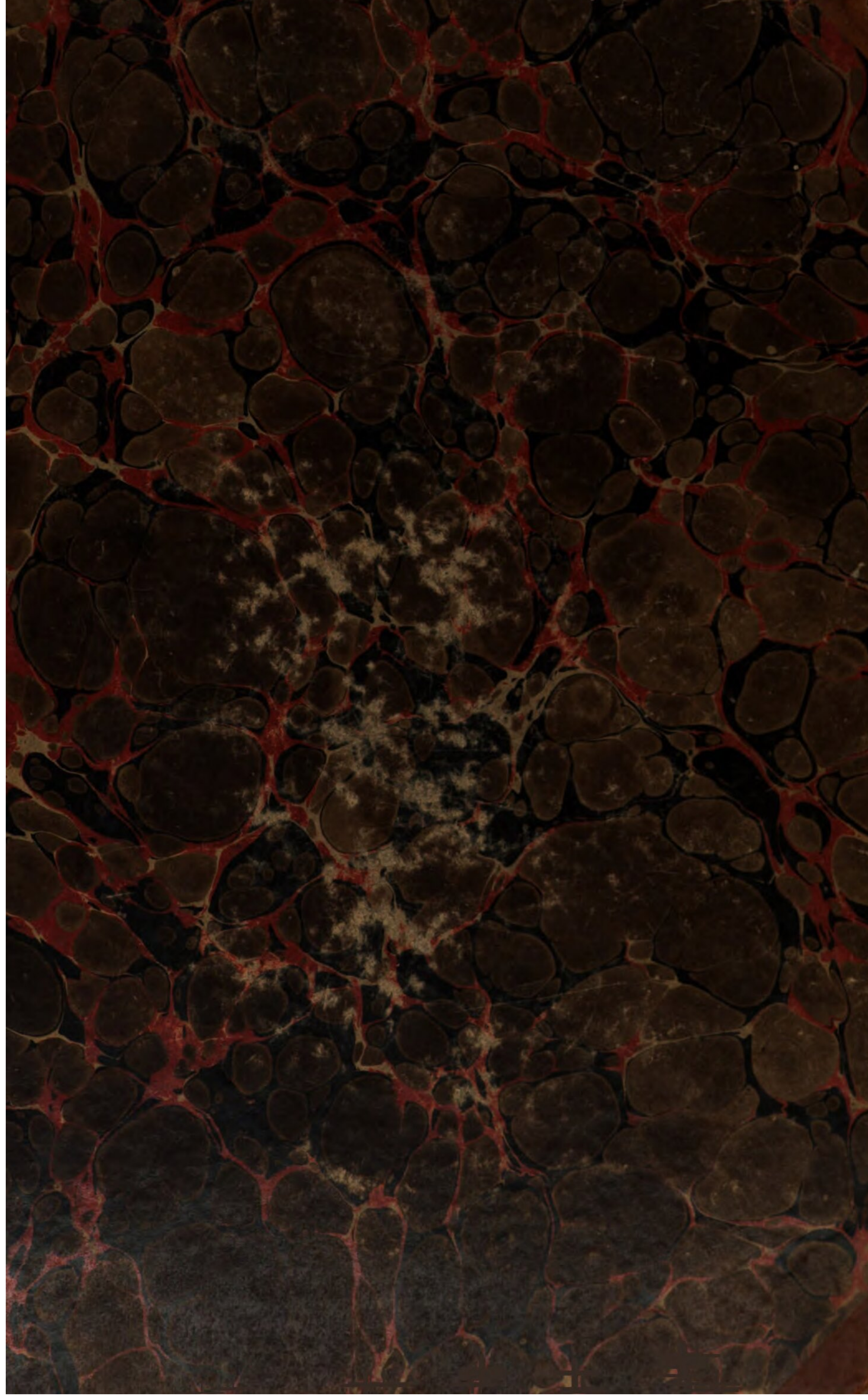
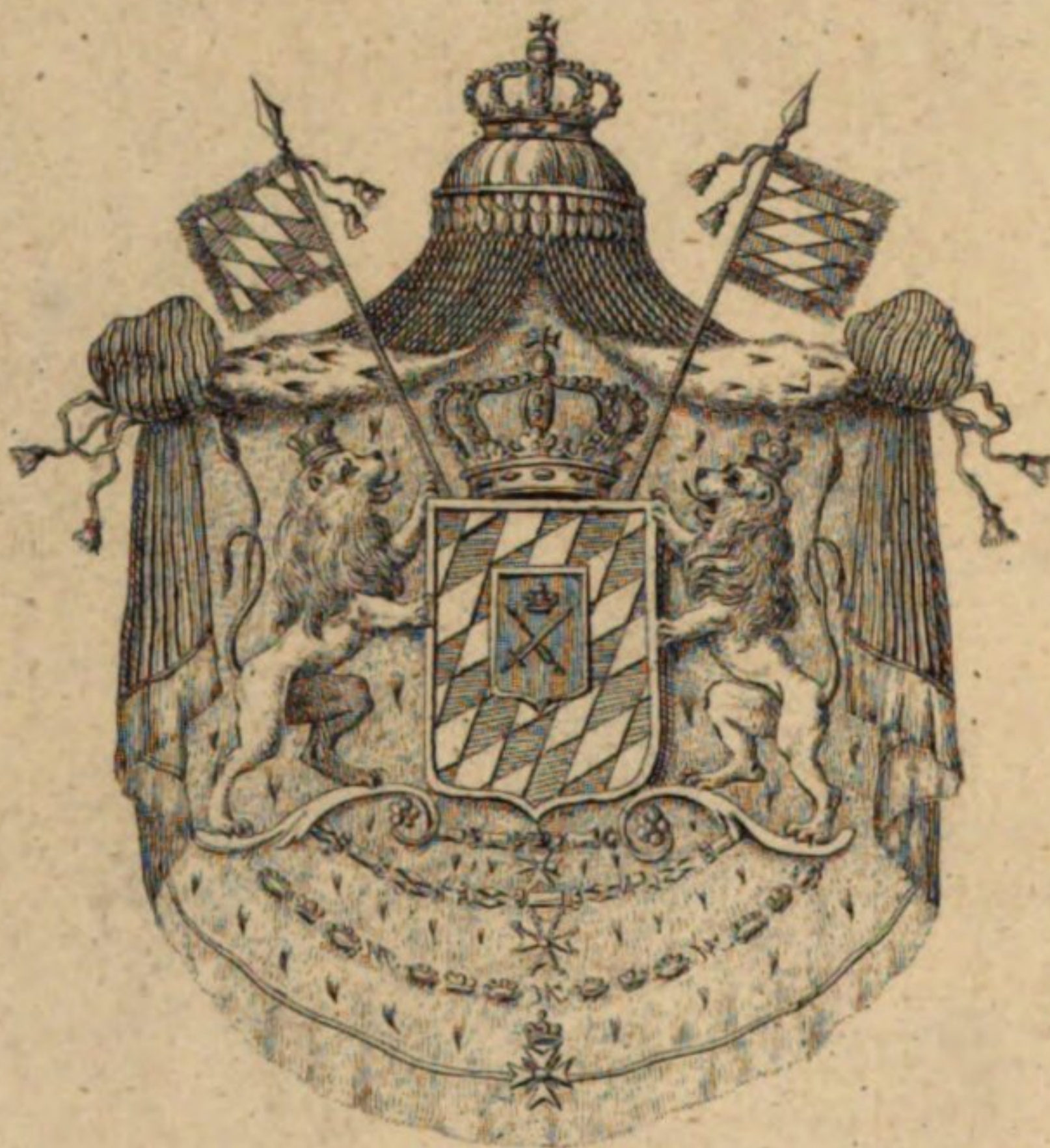




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History of The Peninsular War.

BY

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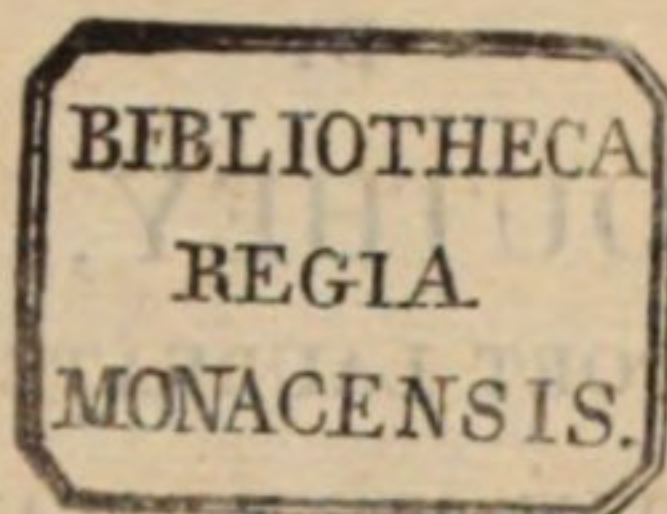
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HISTORY

OF THE

PENINSULAR WAR.

CHAPTER XVI.

TREATY BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND SPAIN. SURRENDER
OF CORUNA AND FERROL. SITUATION OF ROMANA'S ARMY.
BUONAPARTE RETURNS TO FRANCE. PROCEEDINGS AT MA-
DRID. OPERATIONS IN CATALONIA.

HAPPILY for the interests of Great Britain, and for its honour, which is paramount to all interests, the British Government entertained more generous hopes than its General had done, and acted upon wiser views. At the very time when the Spaniards had sustained the heaviest losses, and our own army was known to be in full retreat, a treaty was signed at London between Great Britain and the Spanish nation acting in the name of Ferdinand. It proclaimed a christian, stable, and inviolable peace between the two countries, perpetual and sincere amity, and strict alliance during the war with France; and it pronounced an entire and lasting oblivion of all acts of hostility done on either side in the course of the late wars wherein they had been engaged against each other. His Britannic Majesty

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*Treaty be-
tween Great
Britain and
Spain.*

CHAP. engaged to assist the Spaniards to the utmost of his power, and
 XVI. not to acknowledge any other King of Spain, and of the Indies
 1809. thereunto appertaining, than Ferdinand VII., his heirs, or such
January. lawful successor as the Spanish nation should acknowledge; and
 the Spanish government engaged, on behalf of Ferdinand, never
 to cede to France any portion of the territories or possessions
 of the Spanish monarchy in any part of the world. The con-
 tracting parties bound themselves to make common cause against
 France, and not to make peace except by common consent. It
 was agreed by an additional article, that as the existing cir-
 cumstances did not admit of the regular negotiation of a treaty
 of commerce with all the care and consideration due to so im-
 portant a subject, such a negotiation should be effected as soon
 as it was practicable; and meantime mutual facilities afforded
 to the commerce of both countries, by temporary regulations,
 founded on reciprocal utility. Another separate article pro-
 vided that the Spanish government should take the most effectual
 measures for preventing the Spanish squadrons, in all their ports,
 from falling into the power of France. Before the treaty could
 reach Spain, the mischief against which this latter article was
 intended to provide had been done in the ports of Galicia.

*Surrender
of Coruña.*

There were Englishmen at Coruña, who when Sir John Moore was preparing to embark, doubted whether the inhabitants would protect his embarkation. In the bitterness of grief and shame they said, "should the Galicians tell us that we came into their country and by the imposing display of our well-equipped army prevented them from defending their native mountains; that they entrusted their passes to us and we abandoned them to the enemy; that disregarding any service which seemed immaterial to our own safety, we let the French occupy the approaches to their city; . . . should the volunteers of Coruña tell us this (they said), and throw down their arms when they see us

flying to our ships, . . we should have little right to complain of desertion or abandonment!" But the Spaniards are a more generous people than these doubts implied. Astonished indeed they were at the manner in which an army that had excited by its proud appearance the highest hopes as well as the highest admiration, had retreated through one of the strongest and most defensible countries in Europe; but severely as these hopes were disappointed, and cruelly as they suffered in consequence, they were not betrayed into one unworthy act or expression of resentment. The Governor of Coruña, D. Antonio de Alcedo, had made vigorous preparations as soon as it seemed likely that the enemy might enter Galicia. His name will be remembered as the author of a Geographical Dictionary of Spanish America, much more accurate and copious than any former work relating to those countries. It would be well for him could it be forgotten in the history of his own. While he expected that the British army would make a stand, and maintain Coruña and Ferrol at least, even if they abandoned the field, he held brave language, calling upon the inhabitants to supply stakes, beams, fascines and butts for additional works, and exhorting the women to busy themselves in providing sacks to be filled with earth. "If the French come," said he in his proclamation, "I will take such measures that Coruña shall be not less gloriously distinguished than Gerona, Valencia, and Zaragoza. But should fortune prove adverse to us, as a chastisement from God for our sins, I will bury myself in the ruins of this fortress rather than surrender it to the enemy: thus finishing my days with honour, and trusting that all will follow my example." Wherever in Spain a Governor was found willing to set such an example, the resolution to follow it was not wanting.

Coruña is a regular fortress, and might long have held out against any means which Marshal Soult could have brought

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CHAP. against it. But when an English army with the sea open to them
 XVI. for succours did not think of maintaining it, it is not surprising
 1809. that the inhabitants should have despaired of making a suc-
January. cessful resistance. Their Governor was prepared to play the
 traitor ; he had still however honour enough left not to propose a
 capitulation till the last transport was beyond the enemy's power.
 Terms were then easily agreed on, the one party asking only
 Jan. 19. what the other would have imposed. Alcedo stipulated for a
 general amnesty ; that all persons in office should retain their
 appointments on taking an oath to the Intruder ; and that the
 military who took that oath might either continue in the service
 or receive their dismissal at their own option, such as refused
 the oath becoming prisoners of war. He himself set the ex-
 ample of swearing allegiance to Joseph Buonaparte ; and soon
 in his own person properly experienced with what fidelity the
 French kept their engagements, for they presently dismissed
 him from his government and sent him into France.

*Situation
 and strength
 of Ferrol.*

Coruña and Ferrol are situated on the opposite sides of a
 spacious bay which receives in four deep inlets the rivers Mero,
 Mandeu, Eume and Juvia. Ferrol is placed in the deepest and
 most capacious of these inlets, and nothing which skill and ex-
 pense could effect had been spared during the last half cen-
 tury for improving the natural advantages of the harbour, and
 rendering it impregnable. It had thus been rendered one of the
 strongest naval establishments in the world, being also one of
 the most commodious. To force the passage is impossible,
 ships having for the distance of a league to file one by one along
 a shore defended by forts. Equal care had been taken to pro-
 tect it on the land side. There were at this time eight ships
 of the line in the harbour, of which three were of the largest
 size, . . three frigates, and a considerable number of smaller
 vessels. From Betanzos to Ferrol was but a march of fourteen

miles farther than from Betanzos to Coruña ; and it was a topic of exultation for the French, that the English in the precipitance of their flight had not marched upon Ferrol instead of Coruña, where they might have occupied a fortress strong enough to be called impregnable, and have secured the squadron. It was still fresh in remembrance that when Sir James Pulteney had landed on the coast there with a part of that army by which the French were afterwards expelled from Egypt, he deemed it more prudent to re-embark his troops without attempting any thing, than to hazard an attack against so formidable a place. It is indeed almost impossible to lay regular siege to it: the nature of the ground being such that trenches cannot be opened there.

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Marshal Soult found in Coruña a battering train sufficient for making a feint of besieging Ferrol ; that it would not be in his power to take it he well knew ; . . but he reckoned upon the pusillanimity and treason of the commanders, and upon the fortune of Buonaparte. The population was estimated at 8000, double the number in Coruña ; but the peasantry from the adjacent country had flocked thither, and there were 8000 men within its walls, burning with hatred and indignation against the French, and requiring only a leader in whom they could confide. The persons in authority they suspected, and with too much reason. One of these, the admiral D. Pedro Obregon, they displaced and threw into prison ; it was only removing one traitor to make room for another. D. Francisco Melgarejo, who succeeded to the command of the squadron, opened a correspondence with the enemy by water ; and the military commanders, equally ready to betray their country and their trust, sent messengers round by land at the same time. Accordingly General Mermet had no sooner made a demonstration of investing the town, than the Castles of La Palma and San Martin

*Surrender
of Ferrol.*

CHAP. XVI. were abandoned to him ; and as the disposition of the people
 1809. was of no avail against the vile purposes of their chiefs civil and
 Jan. 26. military, the town was delivered up, upon the same terms as
 Coruña ; a few additional articles being added, stipulating for
 the arrears of pay, as also that if resistance were made in
 any part of Galicia, no inhabitant of Ferrol should be com-
 pelled to serve against his countrymen. Obregon was then
 released from prison, and placed by the French at the head of
 the arsenal ; he and the comrades of his treason took the oath of
 allegiance to the Intruder ; and those persons who had been
 most active in arresting him and in promoting the national
 cause were seized and reserved for punishment.

*Exultation
 of the ene-
 my.*

If the Central Junta had at one time dissembled the danger
 of the country (or rather partaken too much of that unreasoning
 confidence which was one characteristic of the Spaniards), they
 never attempted to conceal its disasters, nor to extenuate them.
 On such occasions their language was frank and dignified, be-
 coming the nation which they represented. In announcing the
 loss of Coruña and Ferrol, they pronounced the surrender of
 those strong places to have been cowardly and scandalous, and
 promised to condemn the persons who had thus betrayed their
 duty, to condign punishment. The enemy meantime failed not
 to blazon forth their triumphs in this Galician campaign : to
 represent the battle of Coruña as a victory on their part was a
 falsehood, which all circumstances, except those of the action
 itself, tended to confirm ; . . . and the results of the campaign had
 been so rapid, and apparently so complete, as to excite their own
 wonder. Three British regiments, they said, the 42d, 50th, and
 52d, had been entirely destroyed in the action, and Sir John
 Moore killed in attempting to charge at their head, with the
 vain hope of restoring the fortune of the day. The English had lost
 every thing which constitutes an army, artillery, horses, baggage,

ammunition, magazines, and military chests. 80 pieces of cannon they had landed, they had re-embarked no more than 12. 200,000 weight of powder, 16,000 muskets, and 2,000,000 of treasure (about £83,000) had fallen into the hands of the pursuers, and treasure yet more considerable had been thrown down the precipices along the road between Astorga and Coruña, where the peasantry and the soldiers were now collecting it. 5000 horses had been counted which they had slaughtered upon the way, . . . 500 were taken at Coruña, and the carcasses of 1200 were infecting the streets when the conquerors entered that town. The English would have occupied Ferrol and seized the squadron there, had it not been for the precipitance of their retreat, and the result of the battle to which they had been brought at last. Thus then had terminated their expedition into Spain! thus, after having fomented the war in that unhappy country, had they abandoned it to its fate! In another season of the year not a man of them would have escaped; now the facility of breaking up the bridges, the rapidity of the winter torrents, shortness of days, and length of nights, had favoured their retreat. But they were driven out of the peninsula, harassed, routed, and disheartened. The kingdom of Leon, the province of Zamora, and all Galicia, which they had been so desirous to cover, were conquered and subdued; and Romana, whom they had brought from the Baltic, was, with the wreck of his army, reduced to less than 2500 men, wandering between Vigo and Santiago, and closely pursued. . . . This was the most stinging of all the French reproaches. Wounded to the heart as we were that an English army should so have retreated, still we knew that wherever our men had been allowed to face the enemy they had beaten them; and that, however the real history of the battle of Coruña might be concealed from the French people, the French army had received a lesson there, which they would remember whenever

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CHAP. it might be our fortune to encounter them again. But that we
 XVI. should have drawn such a force in pursuit of Romana, who, if he
 1809. were taken prisoner, would be put to death with the forms of
January. justice, by a tyrant who made mockery of justice, was of all the
 mournful reflections which this disastrous expedition excited, the
 most painful and the most exasperating.

*Pursuit of
 Romana's
 army.*

At this time indeed Romana's situation might have appeared
 hopeless to any but a Spaniard, and few Spaniards would have
 regarded it with such equanimity as this high-minded nobleman.
 In the virtuous determination of doing his duty to the uttermost,
 whatever might betide, he trusted Providence with the event, and
 gave way to no despondent or repining thought. A detachment
 under G. Franceschi had pursued his army after it had separated
 from Sir J. Moore at Astorga, and according to the French state-
 ments taken some 3000 men, and killed a great number before
 he entered the Val de Orras. The charge of completing its de-
 struction was then transferred by Soult to M. Ney, and he dis-
 patched G. Marchand's division and a regiment of cavalry as
 amply sufficient for the intended service. Romana left his van-
 guard under D. Gabriel de Mendizabal to cover the Val de
 Orras, and the Riberas del Sil; . . one division was posted at
 Pueblo de Tribes and Mendoya, to support him if he should
 be attacked, and defend the bridge over the Bivey; the others
 were distributed where they could find subsistence, and at the
 same time afford support to the more advanced.

*Dismay in
 Galicia.*

The country was in a state of the utmost alarm. The Viz-
 conde de Quintanella, one of the deputies for Leon to the Central
 Junta, had been sent to Romana's army, and disagreeing with
 him before the retreat commenced, had preceded him, in the
 hope of taking some measures which might be serviceable to the
 common cause. Manifest as it was that Sir J. Moore had given
 up that cause in his heart as hopeless, it had never been appre-

hended that he would retreat with such precipitation, and abandon Coruña and Ferrol to their fate; ports the maintenance of which was of so great importance to Great Britain as long as she took any part in the contest. Of all the Spaniards the Galicians had least reason to fear that the war would be brought to their own doors; and their consternation was extreme when they saw the enemy among them. Quintanilla repaired to Santiago, from which city the Archbishop had fled, having been insulted by the people, and dreading farther outrages from the insubordination which these dreadful times produced. As it seemed that nothing could be done for resisting the enemy, Quintanilla endeavoured at least to disappoint them of their expected booty, and proposed that the church plate should be removed. In such treasure that city was peculiarly rich, having been during many centuries more in vogue than any other place of pilgrimage in Europe; but his advice was rejected, upon the ground that the populace, who were suspicious of whatever was done, would not suffer it.

Romana's was a buoyant spirit, not to be depressed by any dangers. He had read the British General rightly, but his confidence in the British character was unshaken; and in the expectation that something would be attempted upon the coast, he moved one of his divisions from Mazedra to Taboada and other villages near Lugo, for the purpose of observing and harassing the enemy. This movement was ordered the day before the battle of Coruña. On the afternoon of the 17th he was apprised that 5000 French were at St. Esteban de Ribas del Sil, three leagues from Orense, and in the night advice came from Mendizabal that he had been attacked by a detachment moving upon that city. Romana reconnoitred this force; they were plainly waiting for reinforcements, but even in their present state he was not strong enough to resist them; for as soon as he entered Galicia, the whole of the new levies had dispersed: they belonged to that province,

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Romana retreats toward Monterey.

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and feeling themselves within reach of home, believed with some reason that they could provide better for themselves than it was in the power of their general and their government to provide for them.

*Blake leaves
the army.*

At his last interview with Sir J. Moore it had been arranged that the British army should make its stand at Villafranca, and there defend the entrance into Galicia, while the Marquis should endeavour to collect and reform his troops upon the river Sil. But because this resolution, fatally for Sir J. Moore, had been abandoned, Romana's left flank and rear were exposed to the enemy. They were at leisure to direct their efforts against him, and he saw that the only way of escape open for him was by Monterrey. In that direction therefore he moved, and fixed his head-quarters on the 21st at Villaza, a league from that town, on the side of Portugal. Here, to his surprise and displeasure, he found that Blake, who had continued with the army till this day, had left it without giving him any intimation of his departure, taken with him the officers whom he could trust, and left directions for others to follow him through Portugal. The camp-marshal, D. Rafael Martinengo, was missing also: his conduct, though irregular, was afterwards honourably explained; he had gone to collect stragglers. With regard to General Blake, serving only as an individual after he had been removed from the command, he was at liberty to retire whither and when he pleased, . . . but not thus, in a manner derogatory to the commander, subversive of discipline, and injurious to the army. His disappearance, and that of the officers who followed him, increased the distrust and despondency of the troops; and the reports which they spread to excuse themselves for thus withdrawing, contributed still farther to dishearten the people. "I assure your excellency," said Romana, when he communicated this to the war minister, "that I never gave a more trying proof of patriotism,

love to my King, and gratitude to the government which in his name has conferred so many honours upon me, than in taking upon myself the command of this army in such circumstances, and retaining it, though abandoned by those who ought to have assisted me. I know not wherein this patriotism consists which is so loudly vaunted . . . any reverse, any mishap, prostrates the minds of these people, and, thinking only of saving their own persons, they sacrifice their country, and compromise their commander."

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The next intelligence was of Sir J. Moore's death in action with M. Soult. The first thought which occurred to Romana was that this would not have happened if they had given battle to that very Soult at Saldaña. It was his firm persuasion that if the British force and his ill-fated troops had been united in October, they might have driven the French beyond the Pyrenees. The British had now actually embarked. Coruña and Ferrol were still points of hope; and if the governors there performed their duty, he could yet render them some service in the field. With this view he moved to cover the province of Tuy; but having reached La Guironda, he learnt in the night that the French with superior forces were at hand. His troops, though well equal to the business of harassing an enemy that should be otherwise employed, would have been lost if brought to action; he returned therefore to Oimbra, with the intention, if he should be pursued, of entering Portugal, and making through Tras-os-Montes for Ciudad Rodrigo, there to refit his army, or reinforce some other with the remnant that was left. A little respite was allowed him, for the French did not think the wreck of this army of sufficient consequence to fatigue themselves by pursuing and hunting it down. Where he and his handful of fugitives were secreting themselves they knew not, and on his part Romana knew as little what was passing in other parts of Spain.

*The French
cease the
pursuit.*

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*January.**Buonaparte
advised that
Austria is
arming.**De Pradt,
211.*

Buonaparte had never appeared so joyous as when he left Madrid with the expectation of surprising Sir John Moore. He had intended to go to Lisbon, and the troops had actually received orders to hold themselves in readiness for beginning their march toward that capital, but the desire of encountering a British army made him change his intention; and Lisbon was thus doubly preserved from a second subjugation, for this movement interposed between the British and Portugal, and if Sir J. Moore had retreated thither, he would have abandoned Lisbon as he did Coruña. When there was no longer a hope of overtaking the English, Buonaparte stopped at Astorga; it was more consistent with his dignity that a detachment of his army should hunt them to the coast, than that he should continue the pursuit in person. Beyond that city, therefore, he would not have proceeded, even if dispatches had not reached him there which recalled him into France. He had designs against Austria, concerning which the Emperor Alexander had been deceived at Erfurt: his intention had been to complete the easy subjugation of Spain before he began to execute these further projects of insatiable ambition; but he was informed that Austria, instead of waiting for the blow, was preparing to avail herself of the advantage which the Spanish war afforded her. The news was not unwelcome to him; for he had now entertained a new train of ambitious and perfidious thoughts, which made him desirous of leaving Spain. From Astorga he turned back to Valladolid, and remained there a few days to make his last arrangements before he returned into France.

*Change in
his views
concerning
Spain.*

An attachment to his family was almost the only human part of Buonaparte's character; but when any object of aggrandisement presented itself to his all-grasping desires, that attachment stood as little in his way as the obligations of truth, honour, and justice. He had been sincere in his intention of giving Spain to

Joseph, while he thought it an easy gift, and one which in its results would prove beneficial to the giver. The resistance which had been made to the intrusion, and the reverses which his arms had for a time experienced, disturbed and mortified him; and in that temper of mind which escapes self-condemnation by reproaching others, he imputed to Joseph's flight from Madrid, as a consequence, the very spirit of resistance which had rendered that measure necessary for his own preservation. For this reason there had been no cordiality at their meeting; he had treated Joseph with disrespect, as well as coldness, and leaving him in the rear, had issued edicts by his own authority, and in his own name. This had been resented by Joseph, as far as one who was the receiver of a stolen crown could resent it: having been made King, he represented it was proper he should appear to be such; to debase him was not the way of rendering him more acceptable to a proud and high-minded nation. In addition to this there was another cause of discontent between them. Whatever country Buonaparte entered, that country was made to support his army; war was to him no expense, . . the cost fell always upon his enemies or his allies. Thus he had expected to proceed in Spain; . . but even when he was master of Madrid the intrusive government had no other revenue than the duties which were paid at its gates, and Joseph, instead of paying his brother's armies, looked to him for the maintenance of his own court. Joseph had represented also the impolicy of continuing to exasperate the people by a system of military exactions; and Napoleon, impatient of any contradiction, instantly perceived that a King of Spain, whether of the Buonaparte or the Bourbon dynasty, must have a Spanish feeling, incompatible with that entire subserviency to himself which he expected and required. Having so lately and so solemnly guaranteed the integrity of Spain, and proclaimed his brother king, he could not at once subvert his

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CHAP. own arrangements ; but he avowed to M. de Pradt at this time
 XVI. that when he had given that kingdom, he did not understand the
 1809. value of the present : follies would be committed, he said, which
 January. would throw it again into his hands, and he would then divide it
 De Pradt, into five viceroyalties.
 207—225.

*He returns
 to France.*

He apprehended no difficulty in this : any military opposition which could be attempted he despised, the more entirely because of the ease with which the Spanish armies had been dispersed, . . . and the moral obstacles he was still incapable of appreciating. A dispatch reached him from Galicia, and upon reading it he said to those about him, “ Every thing proceeds well. Romana cannot resist a fortnight longer. The English will never make another effort ; and three months hence the war will be at an end.” One of the marshals hinted at the character of the people and of the country. “ It is a La Vendée,” he replied ; “ I have tranquillized La Vendée. Calabria also was in a state of insurrection, . . . wherever there are mountains there are insurgents ; but the kingdom of Naples is tranquil now. It is not enough to command an army well, . . . one must have general views. The continental system is not the same as in the time of Frederick ; the great powers must absorb the smaller. The priests have considerable influence here, and they use it to exasperate the people : but the Romans conquered them ; the Moors conquered them ; and they are not near so fine a people now as they were then. I will settle the government firmly ; I will interest the nobles, and I will cut down the people with grape-shot. What do they want ? the Prince of Asturias ? Half the nation object to him : . . . besides he is dead to them. There is no longer any dynasty to oppose to me. They say the population is against us. Why Spain is a perfect solitude, . . . there are not five men to a square league. Besides, if it be a question of numbers, I will pour all Europe into their country. They have to learn

*Jones's Ac-
 count of the
 War, vol. i.
 165.*

what a first-rate power can effect." With this flagitious determination the remorseless tyrant returned into France.

Before he left Madrid to march against the English, an address framed by the traitors of that city in the name of the magistrates and citizens was presented to him by the Corregidor. They thanked him for his gracious clemency, that in the midst of conquest he had thought of the safety and welfare of the conquered, and forgiven all which had been done during the absence of Joseph, their king: and they entreated that it might please him to grant them the favour of seeing King Joseph once more among them, to the end that under his laws that capital and the whole kingdom might enjoy the happiness which they expected from the benevolence of their new sovereign's character. The tyrant replied to this in one of his characteristic harangues. "I am pleased," he said, "with the sentiments of the city of Madrid. I regret the injuries she has suffered, and am particularly happy that, under existing circumstances, I have been able to effect her deliverance, and to protect her from great calamities, and have accomplished what I owed to myself and my nation. Vengeance has had its due: it has fallen upon ten of the principal culprits; . . . the rest have entire and absolute forgiveness." He then touched upon the reforms by which he thought to reconcile the Spaniards to a foreign yoke. "I have preserved the spiritual orders, but with a limitation of the number of monks: they who were influenced by a divine call shall remain in their cloisters; with regard to those whose call was doubtful, or influenced by worldly considerations, I have fixed their condition in the class of secular priests. Out of the surplus of monastic property I have provided for the maintenance of the pastors, that important and useful branch of the clergy. I have suppressed that court which was a subject of complaint to Europe and the present age. Priests may guide the minds of

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*Professions
to the Spaniards at
Madrid.*

CHAP. men, but must exercise no temporal or corporal jurisdiction over
 XVI. the citizens. I have annulled those privileges which the gran-
 1809. dees usurped during times of civil war. I have abolished feudal
January. rights, and henceforth every one may set up inns, ovens, mills,
 employ himself in fishing and rabbit-hunting, and give free
 scope to his industry, provided he respects the laws. The selfish-
 ness, wealth, and prosperity of a small number of individuals
 were more injurious to your agriculture than the heat of the
 Dog-days. All peculiar jurisdictions were usurpations, and at
 variance with the rights of the nation. I have abolished them.
 As there is but one God, so should there be in a state but one
 judicial power.

“There is no obstacle,” he continued, “which can long
 resist the execution of my resolutions. But what transcends my
 power is this, to consolidate the Spaniards as one nation, under
 the sway of the king, should they continue to be affected with
 those principles of hatred to France which the partizans of
 England and the enemies of the continent have infused into the
 bosom of Spain. I can establish no nation, no king, no in-
 dependence of the Spaniards, if the king be not assured of their
 attachment and fidelity. The Bourbons can no longer reign in
 Europe. The divisions of the royal family were contrived by
 the English. It was not the dethronement of King Charles and
 of the favourite, that the Duke del Infantado, that tool of
 England, had in view. The intention was, to establish the pre-
 dominant influence of England in Spain; a senseless project,
 the result of which would have been a perpetual continental
 war. No power under the influence of England can exist on
 the continent. If there be any that entertain such a wish, the
 wish is absurd, and will sooner or later occasion their fall. It
 would be easy for me, should I be compelled to adopt that
 measure, to govern Spain, by establishing as many viceroys in it

as there are provinces. Nevertheless, I do not refuse to abdicate my rights of conquest in favour of the king, and to establish him in Madrid, as soon as the 30,000 citizens which this capital contains, the clergy, nobility, merchants, and lawyers shall have declared their fidelity, set an example to the provinces, enlightened the people, and made the nation sensible that their existence and prosperity essentially depend upon a king and a free constitution, favourable to the people, and hostile only to the selfishness and haughty passions of the grandees. If such be the sentiments of the inhabitants, let the 30,000 citizens assemble in the churches; let them, in the presence of the holy sacrament, take an oath, not only with their mouths, but also with their hearts, and without any jesuitical equivocation, that they promise support, attachment, and fidelity to their king; let the priests in the confessional and the pulpit, the merchants in their correspondence, the lawyers in their writings and speeches, infuse these sentiments into the people: . . . then will I surrender my right of conquest, place the king upon the throne, and make it my pleasing task to conduct myself as a true friend of the Spaniards. The present generation may differ in their opinions; the passions have been too much brought into action; but your grand-children will bless me as their renovator; they will reckon the day when I appeared among you among their memorable festivals; and from that day will the happiness of Spain date its commencement. Thus," he concluded, addressing himself to the Corregidor, "you are informed of the whole of my determination. Consult with your fellow-citizens, and consider what part you will choose; but whatever it be, make your choice with sincerity, and tell me only your genuine sentiments."

There was something more detestable in this affectation of candour and generosity than in his open and insolent violence. "Consult! and consider what part you will choose, and make

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CHAP. your choice with sincerity!" . . The Spanish nation had made
 XVI. their choice! They had made it at Baylen and at Reynosa, at
 1809. Cadiz and at Madrid, at Valencia and at Zaragoza; for life or for
January. death; deliberately, and yet as if with one impulse, . . with enthusiasm, and yet calmly, . . had that noble people nobly, and wisely, and religiously made their heroic choice. They had written it in blood, their own and their oppressors'. Its proofs were to be seen in deserted houses and depopulated towns, in the blackened walls of hamlets which had been laid waste with fire, in the bones which were bleaching upon the mountains of Biscay, and in the bodies, French and Spaniard, which were at that hour floating down the tainted Ebro! Here, in the capital, their choice had been recorded; they who had been swept down by grape-shot in its streets, or bayoneted in the houses, they who had fallen in the heat of battle before its gates, and they who in cold blood had been sent in droves to execution, alike had borne witness to that choice, and confirmed it, and rejoiced in it with their dying breath. And this tyrant called upon the people of Madrid now to tell him their sentiments, . . now when their armies were dispersed, and they themselves, betrayed and disarmed, were surrounded by his legions!

*Registers
opened.*

Registers were opened in every quarter, and, if French accounts could be believed, 30,000 fathers of families rushed thither in crowds, and signed a supplication to the conqueror, entreating him to put an end to their misfortunes, by granting them his august brother Joseph for their king. If this impossible eagerness had really been manifested, it could admit of no other solution than that the people of Madrid, bitterly as they detested and heartily as they despised Joseph, yet thought it a less evil to be governed by him than by the tyrant himself, . . for this was the alternative allowed them. But a census of this kind, as it is called, like those which coloured Buonaparte's assumption, first of the

consulship for life, and then of an hereditary throne, was easily procured, when neither threats, nor persuasions, nor fraud, nor violence were spared.

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The ceremony of voting and taking the oath was delayed till after Buonaparte's departure, "because," said the French journalists, "a suspicion of fear might else have attached to it. The act was now more noble, as being entirely free, . . . as being confirmed by the weightiest considerations whereby a people can be influenced, their interest, their happiness, and their glory." With such language the better part of the French nation were insulted, and the unreflecting deceived, while all knowledge of the real state of things was shut out by the vigilance of a government, conscious enough of wickedness to know that it required concealment. The votes were then exacted, the host was exposed in all the churches, and the priests were compelled to receive from their countrymen at the altar, and as they believed in the actual and bodily presence of their Saviour and their God, a compulsory oath of allegiance to the Intruder. The Catholic system has a salvo in such cases; and the same priests who administered the oath were believed by the French themselves to have released those who took it from its obligations.

*The people
of Madrid
take the
oath of al-
legiance to
Joseph.*

The higher ranks in Madrid had shown themselves from the commencement of these troubles as deficient in public spirit as they had long been in private virtues. Scarcely an individual in that capital who was distinguished for rank, or power, or riches, had stood forward in the national cause, so fallacious is the opinion that those persons will be most zealous in the defence of their country, who have what is called the largest stake in it. Addresses from all the councils and corporate bodies of the metropolis were dispatched to Buonaparte while he tarried at Valladolid, . . . all alike abject, and all soliciting that they might be indulged with the presence of their king.

*Addresses
to the In-
truder.*

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The Council of state, by a deputy, expressed its homage of thanks for the generous clemency of the conqueror. "What gratitude," said he, "does it not owe you for having snatched Spain from the influence of those destructive councils which fifty years of misfortune had prepared for it; for having rid it of the English armies, who threatened to fix upon its territories the theatre of continental war! Grateful for these benefits, the Council of state has still another supplication to lay at the feet of your majesty. Deign, sire, to commit to our loyalty your august brother, our lord and King. Permit him to re-enter Madrid, and to take into his hands the reins of government; that under the benevolent sway of this august prince, whose mildness, wisdom, and justice, are known to all Europe, our widowed and desolate monarchy may find a father in the best of Kings." D. Bernardo Yriarte spoke for the Council of the Indies. "It entirely submits itself," he said, "to the decrees of your Majesty, and to those of your august brother, the King our master, who is to create the happiness of Spain, as well by the wisdom and the assemblage of the lofty virtues which he possesses, as by the powerful support of the hero of Europe, upon whom the Council of the Indies founds its hopes of seeing those ties reunited, which ought always to unite the American possessions with the mother country." The Council of finance requested that it might behold in Madrid the august and beloved brother of the Emperor, expecting from his presence the felicity and repose of the kingdom. The Council of war supplicated him, through an effect of his august beneficence, to confer upon the capital the felicity of the presence of their sovereign, Joseph I. This was the theme upon which all the deputations rung their changes. The Council of marine alone adding an appropriate flattery to the same request, expressed its hope of contributing to the liberty of the seas.

Joseph meantime had exercised his nominal sovereignty in passing decrees. By one the circulation of French money was permitted till farther measures concerning it should be announced; by another all persons entitled to any salary or pension from the government were deprived of it till they should have taken the oath of allegiance to him. He made an attempt also in the autumn, before reinforcements entered Spain, to place the persons belonging to his army under civil protection: and for this purpose required that in every district occupied by the army, from eight to thirty stand of arms should be deposited in every town-house, and an equal number of the respectable inhabitants registered to serve as an escort therewith for any officer or serjeant either on his road as an invalid, or in the execution of any commission. They were also to act as a patrol, for the purpose of preventing any insults or outrages which might be offered to the military, and if men did not volunteer for this service, which would entitle them to pay and rewards, the magistracy were to fix upon those whom they deemed fit to discharge it. He created also a new military order by the name of the *Orden Militar de España*. The Grand Mastership was reserved to himself and his successors; and the two oldest Captains General of the Army and the Fleet were always to be Grand Chancellor and Grand Treasurer: but the order itself was open to soldiers of every rank who should deserve it. A pension of 1000 *reales vellon* was attached to the order, and the device was a crimson star, bearing on one side the Lion of Leon with this motto . . *Virtute et Fide*; on the other the Castle of Castille with *Joseph Napoleo, Hispaniarum et Indiarum Rex, instituit*. Decrees were also issued for raising new regiments, one to be called the Royal Foreign, and the other the first of the Irish Brigade.

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*Edicts of the
Intruder be-
fore his re-
turn to Ma-
drid.*

On the 22d of January the Intruder re-entered that city,

CHAP. from which he had been driven by the indignation of a whole
 XVI. people. At break of day his approach was announced by the
 1809. discharge of an hundred cannon ; a fit symphony, announcing
 January. at once to the people by what right he claimed the throne, and
 Joseph's en- by what means he must sustain himself upon it. From the gate
 trance into of Atocha to the church of St. Isidro, and from thence to the
 Madrid. palace, the streets were lined with French troops, and detach-
 ments were stationed in every part of the city, more for the
 purpose of overawing the inhabitants than of doing honour to
 this wretched puppet of majesty, who, while he submitted to be
 the instrument of tyranny over the Spaniards, was himself a
 slave. The cavalry advanced to the Plaza de las Delicias to
 meet him ; there he mounted on horseback, and a procession
 was formed of his aides-de-camp and equerries, the grand major
 domo, the grand master of the ceremonies, the grand master of
 the hounds, with all the other personages of the drama of
 royalty, the members of the different councils, and those gran-
 dees who, deserting the cause of their country, stained now with
 infamy names which had once been illustrious in the Spanish
 annals. At the gate of Atocha the governor of Madrid was
 ready to present him with the keys. As soon as he entered
 another discharge of an hundred cannon proclaimed his pre-
 sence, and all the bells struck up. He proceeded through the
 city to the church of St. Isidro, where the suffragan Bishop, in
 his pontificals, the canons, vicars, and rectors, the vicar-general,
 and the prelates of the religious orders, received him at the gate,
 and six of the most ancient canons conducted him to the
 throne. Then the suffragan Bishop addressed him in the only
 language which might that day be used, the language of ser-
 vility, adulation, impiety, and treason. The Intruder's reply was
 in that strain of hypocrisy which marked the usurpation of the
 Buonapartes with new and peculiar guilt. This was his speech :

“ Before rendering thanks to the Supreme Arbiter of Destinies, for my return to the capital of this kingdom intrusted to my care, I wish to reply to the affectionate reception of its inhabitants, by declaring my secret thoughts in the presence of the living God, who has just received your oath of fidelity to my person. I protest then, before God, who knows the hearts of all, that it is my duty and conscience only which induce me to mount the throne, and not my own private inclination. I am willing to sacrifice my own happiness, because I think you have need of me for the establishment of yours. The unity of our holy religion, the independence of the monarchy, the integrity of its territory, and the liberty of its citizens, are the conditions of the oath which I have taken on receiving the crown. It will not be disgraced upon my head; and if, as I have no doubt, the desires of the nation support the efforts of its king, I shall soon be the most happy of all, because you through me will all be happy.”

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Two rows of banqueting tables were laid out in the nave of the church, where the civil and military officers of the intruder, and the members of the councils, were seated according to their respective ranks. High mass was performed by the chapel-royal, and a solemn Te Deum concluded the mockery. That done, Joseph proceeded with the same form to the palace, and a third discharge of an hundred guns proclaimed his arrival there. On the day which followed this triumphal entry, its ostentatious joy, and the affected humanity and philanthropy of his professions, he issued a decree for the formation of special military tribunals, which should punish all persons with death who took arms against him, or enlisted others for the patriotic cause: the gallows was to be the mode of punishment, and over the door of the sufferer's house a shield was to be placed, for infamy, recording the cause and manner of his ignominious death. Any innkeeper or house-

*Edicts
against the
Patriots.*

CHAP. holder in whose dwelling a man should be enlisted for the Junta's
 XVI. service should undergo the same fate ; but if they gave informa-
 1809. tion, 400 reales were promised them, or an equivalent reward.
January.

*Circular
 epistle to the
 clergy.*

The very day that this decree was issued, mingling, like his flagitious brother, words of blasphemy with deeds of blood, he addressed a circular epistle to the Archbishops and Bishops of the realm, commanding them to order a Te Deum in all the churches of their respective dioceses. “ In returning to the capital, (this was his language), our first care, as well as first duty, has been to prostrate ourselves at the feet of that God who disposes of crowns, and to devote to him our whole existence for the felicity of the brave nation which he has entrusted to our care. For this only object of our thoughts we have addressed to him our humble prayers. What is an individual amid the generations who cover the earth? What is he in the eyes of the Eternal, who alone penetrates the intentions of men, and according to them determines their elevation? He who sincerely wishes the welfare of his fellows serves God, and omnipotent goodness protects him. We desire that, in conformity with these dispositions, you direct the prayers of the faithful whom Providence has entrusted to you. Ask of God, that his spirit of peace and wisdom may descend upon us, that the voice of passion may be stifled in meditating upon such sentiments as ought to animate us, and which the general interests of this monarchy inspire: that religion, tranquillity, and happiness may succeed to the discords to which we are now exposed. Let us return thanks to God for the success which he has been pleased to grant to the arms of our august brother and powerful ally the Emperor of the French, who has had no other end in supporting our rights by his power than to procure to Spain a long peace, founded on her independence.”

A heavy load of national guilt lay upon the nations of the Peninsula; and those persons, who, with well-founded faith,

could see and understand that the moral government of the world is neither less perfect, nor less certain in its course, than that material order which science has demonstrated, . . . they perceived in this dreadful visitation the work of retribution. The bloody conquests of the Portuguese in India were yet unexpiated ; the Spaniards had to atone for extirpated nations in Cuba and Hayti, and their other islands, and on the continent of America for cruelties and excesses not less atrocious than those which they were appointed to punish. Vengeance had not been exacted for the enormities perpetrated in the Netherlands, nor for that accursed tribunal which, during more than two centuries, triumphed both in Spain and Portugal, to the ineffaceable and eternal infamy of the Romish church. But the crimes of a nation, like the vices of an individual, bring on their punishment in necessary consequence, . . . so righteously have all things been ordained. From the spoils of India and America the two governments drew treasures which rendered them independent of the people for supplies ; and the war which their priesthood waged against knowledge and reformation succeeded in shutting them out from these devoted countries. A double despotism, of the throne and of the altar, was thus established, and the result was a state of degradation, which nothing less than the overthrow of both, by some moral and political earthquake, loosening the very foundations of society, could remove. Such a convulsion had taken place, and the sins of the fathers were visited upon the children. Madrid, the seat of Philip II., “that sad intelligencing tyrant,” who from thence, as our great Milton said, “mischieved the world with his mines of Ophir,” that city which once aspired to be the mistress of the world, and had actually tyrannized over so large a part of it, was now itself in thralldom. The Spanish cloak, which was the universal dress of all ranks, was prohibited in the metropolis of Spain, and no Spaniard was allowed to walk abroad

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January.

*Condition
of Madrid.*

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in the evening, unless he carried a light. All communication between the capital and the southern provinces, the most fertile and wealthiest of the kingdom, was cut off. Of the trading part of the community, therefore, those who were connected with the great commercial cities of the south coast were at once ruined, and they whose dealings lay with the provinces which were the seat of war were hardly more fortunate. The public creditors experienced that breach of public faith which always results from a violent revolution. The intrusive government acknowledged the debt, and gave notice of its intention to pay them by bills upon Spanish America : for this there was a double motive, the shame of confessing that the Intruder was unable to discharge the obligations of the government to whose rights and duties he affected to succeed, and the hope of interesting the holders of these bills in his cause : but so little possibility was there of his becoming master of the Indies, that the mention of such bills only provoked contempt. While commercial and funded property was thus destroyed, landed property was of as little immediate value to its owner. No remittances could be made to the capital from that part of Spain which was not yet overrun ; and the devastations had been so extensive every where as to leave the tenant little means of paying the proprietor. These were the first-fruits of that prosperity which the Buonapartes promised to the Spaniards, . . . these were the blessings which Joseph brought with him to Madrid ! He, meantime, was affecting to participate in rejoicings, and receiving the incense of adulation, in that city where the middle classes were reduced to poverty by his usurpation, and where the wives whom he had widowed, and the mothers whom he had made childless, mingled with their prayers for the dead, supplications for vengeance upon him as the author of their miseries. The theatre was fitted up to receive him, the boxes were lined with silk, the municipality

attended him to his seat, he was presented with a congratulatory poem upon his entrance, and the stage curtain represented the Genius of Peace with an olive-branch in his left hand, and a torch in his right, setting fire to the attributes of war. Underneath was written, "Live happy, Sire! reign and pardon!" At the very time when this precious specimen of French taste complimented the Intruder upon his clemency, an extraordinary criminal Junta was formed, even the military tribunals not being found sufficiently extensive in their powers for the work of extermination which was begun. It was "for trial of assassins, robbers, recruiters in favour of the insurgents, those who maintained correspondence with them, and who spread false reports." Persons apprehended upon these charges were to be tried within twenty-four hours, and sentenced to the gallows, and the sentence executed without appeal.

Another of the Intruder's decrees enjoined that the Madrid Gazette should be under the immediate inspection of the Minister of Police, and copies of it regularly sent to every Bishop, parochial priest, and municipality, that the people might be informed of the acts of government, and of public events. Joseph's ministers, under whatever self-practised delusion they entered his service, conformed themselves in all things now to the spirit of Buonaparte's policy, and employed force and falsehood with as little scruple as if they had been trained in the revolutionary school. While they affected to inform the people of what was passing, they concealed whatever was unfavourable, distorted what they told, and feigned intelligence suited to their views. They affirmed that the English goods taken at Bilbao, S. Andero, and the ports of Asturias, would defray the expenses of the war; and that England itself was on the point of bankruptcy. Such multitudes, it was affirmed, had repaired to Westminster Hall to give bail for their debts, that it seemed as if all London had been there; numbers

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February.

Feb. 18.

False intelligence published by the intrusive government.

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January.*Unwilling-
ness of the
Spaniards
to believe
that Morla
was a trai-
tor.*

were thrown down by the press, and trodden under foot, . . many almost suffocated, and some were killed. Such falsehoods were not too gross for the government where it could exclude all truer information ; where this was not in its power, it resorted to the more feasible scheme of exciting suspicions against England ; and here the Buonapartes had a willing agent in Morla.

Prone as the Spaniards were in these unhappy times to suspect any person, and to act upon the slightest suspicion, they were slow in believing that Morla had proved false. The people of Cadiz would hardly be convinced that their governor, whose patriotic addresses were still circulating among them, could possibly have gone over to the Intruder. So many measures of utility, so many acts of patriotism and of disinterested vigilance in his administration, were remembered, that the first reports of his perfidy were indignantly received ; a fact so contrary to all their experience was not to be credited, and they felt as if they injured him in listening to such an accusation. He had established among them a reputation like that which a Cadi sometimes enjoys in Mahomedan countries, where his individual uprightness supplies the defects of law, and resists the general corruption of manners. A peasant, whom he had acquitted upon some criminal charge, brought him a number of turkeys, as a present in gratitude for his acquittal. Morla put him in prison, consigned the turkeys to the gaoler for his food, and set him at liberty when he had eaten them all. There was neither law, equity, nor humanity in this, . . yet it had an extravagant, oriental ostentation of justice, well calculated to impress the people with an opinion of his nice honour and scrupulous integrity. But this man, who in all his public writings boasted of his frankness and of his honourable intentions, was in reality destitute both of truth and honour ; and the revolution, which developed some characters and corrupted

others, only unmasked his. Early in these troubles Lord Col-
 lingwood and Sir Hew Dalrymple had discovered his duplicity.
 He had signed, and was believed to have written Solano's ill-
 timed and worse-intended proclamation, in which the English
 were spoken of with unqualified reprobation, and as the real
 enemies against whom all true Spaniards ought to unite; and
 when warned by Solano's fate, he joined in the national cause,
 the desire of injuring that cause by every possible means seems
 to have been the main object of his crooked policy. When
 Castaños wanted the assistance of General Spencer's corps, he
 threw out hints to that General that it would be required for the
 defence of Cadiz; though, from jealousy of the English, at that
 very time he prevented the Junta from bringing the garrison of
 Ceuta into the field, and had given it as his decided opinion that
 no English troops should be admitted into any Spanish fortress.
 And while he endeavoured to make the Junta of Seville sus-
 picious of English interference, he recommended to the accre-
 dited agents of England, that they should interfere early and
 decidedly in forming a central government, and appointing a
 commander-in-chief, and that their influence should be strength-
 ened by marching an army into Spain.

But the most prominent feature of Morla's sophisticated
 character was his odious hypocrisy. In the letter which an-
 nounced to the Central Junta the capitulation of Madrid he
 bestowed the highest eulogiums upon the Intruder and himself.
 "Yesterday," said he, "as a Counsellor of State I saw Prince
 Joseph, our appointed King, and the object of the rabble's con-
 tumely. I assure you, with all that ingenuousness which belongs
 to me, that I found him an enlightened philosopher, full even to
 enthusiasm of the soundest principles of morality, humanity, and
 affection to the people whom his lot has called him to command.
 My eulogies might appear suspicious to those who do not know

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*Proofs of
his prior
treachery.*

*Morla's let-
ter to the
Central
Junta;*

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me well ; I suppress them therefore, and only say thus much, that the Junta, according to circumstances, may regulate its own conduct and resolutions upon this information. My whole aim and endeavour will always be for the honour and integrity of my country. I will not do myself the injustice to suppose that any of the nation can suspect me of perfidy ; my probity is known and accredited, and therefore I continue to speak with that candour and ingenuousness which I have always used." He also delivered his opinion as an individual who was most anxious for the good of the nation, that the governor of Cadiz should be instructed not to let the English assemble either in or near that city in any force ; but that, under pretext of securing himself from the French, he should throw up works against them, reinforce the garrison, and secretly strengthen the batteries toward the sea. And that advices should be dispatched to the Indies, for the purpose of preventing treasure or goods from being sent, lest they should fall into the hands of these allies, who having no longer any hope of defending the cause, would seek to indemnify themselves at the expense of the Spaniards. The Junta published this letter as containing in itself sufficient proofs of perfidiousness and treason in the writer. And they observed that at the very time when this hypocrite was advising them to distrust the English, and arm against them, large sums had been remitted them from England, farther pecuniary aids were on the way, their treasures from America had been secured from the French, by being brought home in British ships, and Great Britain had given the most authentic proof of its true friendship with Spain, by refusing to negotiate with Buonaparte.

*and to the
governor
of Cadiz.*

Shortly afterwards a letter of Morla's was intercepted, written in the same strain to D. Josef Virues, the provisional governor of Cadiz. The thorough hypocrite talked of the good which he

had done in surrendering Madrid, and the consolation which he derived from that reflection; he lamented over his beloved Cadiz and its estimable inhabitants, who had given him so many proofs of their confidence and affection, and wished that he could avert the dangers that impended over them with the sacrifice of his own blood. "If it became an English garrison," he said, "it would be more burdensome to the nation than Gibraltar, and the commerce of the natives would be ruined: much policy as well as courage would be required to prevent this. I need not," he concluded, "exhort your excellency to defend Cadiz with the honour and patriotism which become you; but when you have fulfilled this obligation, honourable terms may save the city, and secure its worthy inhabitants." In consequence of this letter it became necessary to remove Virues from the command, more for his own sake than for any distrust of his principles, though he had at one time been Godoy's secretary, and though Morla had been his friend and patron. Unwilling, and perhaps unable to believe that one whom he had so long been accustomed to regard with respect and gratitude was the consummate hypocrite and traitor which he now appeared to be, Virues attempted to excuse Morla as having acted under compulsion, an excuse more likely to alleviate for the time his own feelings than to satisfy his judgement. But he felt that under these circumstances it was no longer proper for him to remain in possession of an important post: high as he stood in the opinion of his countrymen, the slightest accident might now render him suspected; and at this crisis it was most essential that the people should have entire confidence in their chiefs. He therefore gladly accepted a mission to England, and D. Felix Jones, who had distinguished himself in the operations against Dupont, was appointed governor. Instead of additional defences toward the sea, new works were begun on the land side, to protect the city

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January.*Arrest and
cruel im-
prisonment
of the
French at
Cadiz.*

against its real enemies, and Colonel Hallowell came from Gibraltar to direct them. Ammunition and stores in abundance were sent from Seville. The new governor began by taking measures of rigorous precaution. No person whatever, not even an Englishman, was permitted to go a mile beyond the city without a passport. Every Frenchman in the place was arrested and sent on board the ships. This was intended for their own security as well as the safety of the city; for so highly were the people incensed against that perfidious nation, and such was their fear of treachery in every person belonging to it, that they purposed putting all whom they should find at large to death; and it was said that three hundred knives had been purchased at one shop, to be thus employed. Had there been leisure, or had the Spaniards been in a temper for humane considerations, these persons ought to have been supplied with means of transport to their own country; instead of which they were consigned to a most inhuman state of confinement. The property also of all French subjects, under which term the natives of all countries in subjection to France were included, was confiscated; . . . and in consequence above three hundred shops were shut up, and more than as many families reduced to ruin. Thus it is, that in such times injustice provokes retaliation, wrongs lead to wrongs, and evil produces evil in miserable series.

*Death of
Florida
Blanca.*

At this juncture, when every hour brought tidings of new calamities and nearer danger, Florida Blanca, the venerable president of the Central Junta, died, at the great age of eighty-one; fatigue, and care, and anxiety having accelerated his death. When the order of the Jesuits was abolished, he was ambassador at Rome, and is believed to have been materially instrumental in bringing about that iniquitous measure; and it was under his ministry that Spain joined the confederacy against

Great Britain during the American war. These are acts of which he had abundant reason to repent; but there were specious motives for both; and this must be said of Florida Blanca, that of all the ministers who have exercised despotic authority in Spain, no other ever projected or accomplished half so much for the improvement of the people and the country. Whatever tended to the general good received his efficient support, and twenty years of subsequent misrule had not been sufficient to undo the beneficial effects of his administration. It was Godoy's intention that his exile from the court should be felt as a disgrace and a punishment; but the retirement to which it sent him suited the disposition and declining years of the injured man, and he passed his time chiefly in those religious meditations which are the natural support and solace of old age. Many rulers and statesmen have retired into convents when they have been wearied or disgusted with the vanities and vexations of the world; few have been called upon, like Florida Blanca, in extreme old age, to forsake their retirement, their tranquillity, and their habits of religious life, for the higher duty of serving their country in its hour of danger. The Central Junta manifested their sense of his worth by conferring a grandee-ship upon his heir, and all his legitimate descendants who should succeed him in the title. He was succeeded as president by the Marques de Astorga, a grandee of the highest class, and the representative of some of the proudest names in Spanish history. The education of this nobleman had been defective, as was generally the case with Spanish nobles, and his person excited contempt in those who are presumptuous and injurious enough to judge only by appearances. But he had not degenerated from the better qualities of his illustrious ancestry: they who knew him best, knew that he possessed what ought to be the distinctive marks of old nobility: he was generous, mag-

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1809.

January.*Marques de
Astorga
president of
the Junta.*

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XVI.

1808.

Catalonia,
1808.

nanimous, and high-spirited, without the least apparent consciousness of being so.

After the fall of Madrid there was yet one quarter to which the Junta might look with reasonable hope, amid the disasters that crowded upon them. If Barcelona could be recovered, the acquisition of that most important place would balance the worst reverses which they had yet sustained. But ill fortune every where pursued them, and there was this to aggravate the disappointment, that their losses in Catalonia were more imputable to misconduct than to any want of strength. A force had been collected there fully equal both in numbers and discipline (had it been directed with common prudence) to the services expected from it. After the arrival of the troops from Portugal and Majorca, and the Granadan army, it consisted of about 28,000 regular troops, and 1600 cavalry, besides the garrisons of Rosas, Hostalrich, and Gerona, who were nearly 6000. The sea being commanded by their allies, was open to them along the whole line of coast, except at Barcelona; and the people, who have always been eminently distinguished for their activity, industry, hardihood, and invincible spirit of independence, were ready to make any sacrifices and any exertions for the deliverance of their native land. The province too was full of fortified places, and even in so defensible a country as Spain peculiarly strong by nature. But to counterbalance these advantages, there were the confusion and perplexity, as well as the distance of the Central Junta; the inexperience and rashness of those who had taken upon themselves the local government; want of science, of decision, and of ability in the generals; want of authority every where; the fearful spirit of insubordination, which on the slightest occasion was ready to break out; . . . and, above all, that reckless and unreasonable confidence which had now become part of the Spanish character.

There was some excuse for this confidence in the Catalans ; they knew their own temper and the strength of their country ; and they had obtained some signal successes before any regular troops came to their assistance. But this remembrance, and the knowledge that so large a regular force was in the field, induced a fatal belief that the difficulties of the struggle were over, and that nothing remained to complete their triumph but the recovery of Barcelona. And this, they said, might easily be effected : the enemy there were weak, in want of provisions, sickly, dispirited by defeat and desertion ; the English squadron at hand to assist in an attack upon Monjuich and the citadel ; and the inhabitants ready upon the first appearance of success to rise upon their invaders and open the gates. Among the French and Italians themselves, there were some, they affirmed, who would gladly forsake the wicked cause wherein they were engaged, and by contributing to deliver up these places atone for the treachery in which they had been compelled to bear a part. This was the cry of the people ; and these representations were strengthened by some of the citizens, who were perpetually proposing plans contradictory to each other, and alike impracticable : the Supreme Junta represented the people but too faithfully, partaking their inexperience, their impatience, and their errors ; and General Vives, surrounded by ignorant advisers, controlled if not intimidated by popular opinion, and himself altogether incompetent to the station which he filled, wasted the precious weeks in a vain display before Barcelona ; not perceiving or not regarding that the possession of the city would have been useless to him while the French possessed the citadel and Montjuich ; that he had no means for besieging those strong places ; . . . and above all, that if the French were prevented from relieving them, they must inevitably soon fall into his hands without a blow.

Duhesme, in fact, had announced to his government that his

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

*Siege of
Barcelona.*

*St. Cyr ap-
pointed to*

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

*command
the French
in Cata-
lonia.*

provisions would not hold out beyond the month of December ; and to throw in supplies by sea was impossible. Buonaparte was well aware of the danger, and saw in part what consequences might be apprehended from it. He knew how Barcelona had been defended in the Succession war, and had calculated that if it were now to be recovered by the Spaniards it would cost him not less than fourscore thousand lives to regain possession of it. Such a sacrifice he would have made without one compunctious feeling ; but that blood might have been expended without effecting the purchase, . . for if such a siege had been undertaken, England must and would have made exertions commensurate to the occasion. That these consequences did not follow was owing to the errors and incapacity of his opponents, not to his own measures. In other cases the force which he prepared was always fully equal to the service for which it was designed ; in the present, it was so inadequate, as to excite in the General, Gouvion Saint Cyr, a suspicion that failure on his part would be more agreeable to the Emperor than success. That General had belonged to the army of the Rhine, which was an original sin in Buonaparte's eyes ; and having a command in Naples he had refused to obtain addresses from the troops soliciting the First Consul to take upon himself the imperial dignity ; . . an irre-missible offence. Moreover, great commander as Buonaparte was, he was jealous of any victories which were not obtained when he was in the field, so that the renown might redound to himself. Indulging at once this littleness of mind, and his personal or political dislike, it was his wish that Gouvion St. Cyr should not distinguish himself by any brilliant success ; at the same time he knew the miserable state of the Spanish armies, and still more of the counsels by which they were directed, well enough to rely upon his relieving Barcelona. His instructions were to effect that object, to collect considerable magazines in

Figueras at the enemy's expense ; to subdue the valleys, making them feel the whole weight of the war, and in fine to crush the enemy : having these objects in view, every thing was left to his own discretion.

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XVI.

1808.

*St. Cyr, 26.
42. Do.
Pièces Jus-
tificatives,
No. 7.*

When St. Cyr arrived at Perpignan, at the end of August, the town was full of sick and wounded, for whose relief no preparation had been made, so little had any reverses been expected. He found there some Tuscan regiments, the poor Queen of Etruria's guards, and a battalion from the Valais . . for even that country was called upon to contribute from its recesses to this insatiable tyrant's demand for human life. These troops had been sent back from Figueras by General Reille as being quite unable to take the field, not for want of discipline only, but of equipments, arms, and even necessary clothing. So miserable was their condition, that it was deemed prudent to quarter them in remote places, and train them out of sight, lest they should excite indignation as well as commiseration in the people, who in the south of France had always been ill affected toward Buonaparte, and suffering at this time from the loss of their trade with Spain, detested the injustice of the war, and were in a temper which might have produced formidable consequences if any serious invasion had been attempted on that side. During the autumn troops continued to arrive there, mostly consisting of conscripts from Genoa, Naples, and other parts of Italy : under good training they soon became good soldiers, and only less to be trusted than the French because they were more inclined to desert. These forces when collected amounted to 18,000 men. Reille had 4000 at Figueras, and 8000 were with Duhesme in Barcelona.

*St. Cyr,
19 34.*

Early in November St. Cyr received orders to enter Spain, and he determined to commence his operations with the siege of Rosas. While the fine roadstead which that fortress commands

*He deter-
mines upon
besieging
Rosas.*

CHAP. was open to the English, there was scarcely a chance of throw-
 XVI. ing supplies into Barcelona by sea; to escort them by land was
 1808. not possible while Gerona and Hostalrich were in possession
 November. of the Spaniards; and if those places had been taken they could
 not be provisioned unless Rosas also were held by the French. Rosas is situated four leagues east of Figueras, in the bottom of the bay, where the plain of Ampurdan touches the skirts of the Pyrenees. The town, containing then about 1200 inhabitants, is built along the shore, and completely commanded by the fortress; the fortress, which is an irregular pentangle, the town, and a smaller fort, called, after a custom too prevalent in Catholic countries, Fuerte de la Trinidad, forming a semi-circle round the bay. This place had sustained a most gallant siege of ten weeks in 1795 after Figueras, strong as it was, had been surrendered without defence; and when the commander, D. Domingo Yzquierdo, could maintain the almost demolished works no longer, he succeeded in embarking the remains of his garrison. During the peace nothing had been done to repair the works, as if no future war was to be apprehended. Even after the present struggle had commenced, six months, in that supineness which belongs to the Spanish character, had been suffered to elapse without taking any measures for strengthening and securing a place of such evident importance. There were many persons, and even some members of the nearest Juntas, who were acquainted with the details of the last siege, and knew what repairs were necessary, and also what the points were which it was most material to strengthen. But their attention was wholly engrossed by local and immediate interests, and the pressing representations which the commandant of engineers repeatedly addressed to the higher authorities produced no effect. Nothing could rouse them from their dream of recovering Barcelona by force of arms.

Marcillac.
299—313.

The Governor however, D. Pedro O'Daly, Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment of Ulster, as soon as he apprehended an attack had made some preparations; he ordered all strangers who had taken refuge there to depart, and sent away by sea such of the garrison as were incapable of service. The ditches were cleared, parapets formed, and guns mounted. The north angle of the fort had been demolished by the explosion of a magazine; a wall of stones without mortar was run up by the peasants; it closed the breach, but that part of the works remained useless. The stores were as incomplete as the works: there were neither measures for the powder, nor saws for the fusees, . . . hats and axes were used instead. The buildings within the fort were in ruins, an old church and one other edifice being all that were serviceable. Before the former siege a line nearly half a mile in length, with some redoubts, had been formed from the citadel to that part of the mountain range which is called Puig-rom, for the purpose of covering the town; but it was now in all parts so dilapidated, that though the garrison as well as the inhabitants were aware how much they needed this additional protection, any attempt at re-establishing it was deemed hopeless.

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

November.

*Dilapidated
state of that
fortress.**Cabañes,
c. 10.**Prepara-
tions for the
siege.*

Preparations for the siege had been made at Figueras, and in order to deceive the Spaniards a report had been encouraged that the design was against Gerona. St. Cyr established his head quarters at Figueras, and General Reille, to whom the conduct of the siege had been entrusted, encamped before Rosas with his own division and that of the Italian General Pino. General Souham took a position between Figueras and the Fluvia, to protect the besiegers on that side against any attempt which might be made from Gerona; and Chabot was stationed nearer the frontier, the General being well aware that the opposition which he had to apprehend was not so much from regular troops as from the whole population of the country. But

Nov. 6.

CHAP. the measures of the Catalans were so ill-directed at this time, that
 XVI. the invaders suffered more from the weather, and from the gross
 1808. neglect of their own government in sending them supplies, than
 November. from all the efforts of their enemies. St. Cyr was obliged to
 send his cavalry back into France to the neighbourhood of
 Beziers, that the horses might not perish for want of fodder
 during the siege; and when he wrote pressingly for supplies for
 his men, directions were sent him in return to collect and con-
 voy provisions to Barcelona. He was desired not to regard any
 reports concerning the rabble opposed to him, for it was nothing
 more, and the time was fixed within which the emperor expected
 that he would be master of Barcelona and of the country ten
 leagues round. In reply to this he stated that he would not
 break up the siege of Rosas without positive orders; that it was
 sufficiently hazardous to advance leaving Gerona behind him;
 but if Rosas were left also, Figueras would be again blockaded
 by the Spaniards, and must fall, because it was not possible
 to store it: so that the only way to secure that most important
 fortress was to take Rosas.

*Do. Pièces
 Justif. 45—
 16.*

*British
 squadron in
 the Bay of
 Rosas.*

However much St. Cyr and the government under which he
 acted differed in other points, they both knew the incapacity of
 the forces opposed to them, and relied upon it. They knew
 that there would be no difficulty in routing the Spaniards when-
 ever they were brought to action, that nothing was to be appre-
 hended from any combined operations, and that neither by sea
 or land was any such exertion as the time required to be expected
 from the English, . . the siege of Rosas would otherwise have been
 a more perilous undertaking than the march to Barcelona. The
 English had just force enough in the Bay to give the French an
 opportunity of boasting that the siege was effected in spite of
 them, and to show what might have been done if a flying squa-
 dron with troops on board had been on the coast ready to act

wherever it might be most serviceable. Captain West was in the bay in the *Excellent*, with the *Lucifer* and *Meteor*, bomb vessels; and when the enemy, having taken possession of the heights which encompass the whole bay, had driven the troops in, and the peasants from the nearest villages with them, and entered the town, these vessels bore a part in the action, and assisted in dislodging them. Five-and-twenty marines were then sent to reinforce Fort Trinidad, and the rest of the marines, with fifty seamen, went cheerfully to assist in defending the citadel. Upon this a report was spread by the enemy, who were always endeavouring to make the Spaniards jealous of their allies, that the English had taken possession of the place; and as while this report was circulated they succeeded in intercepting all communications from Rosas to Gerona, the Junta of that city wrote to Captain West, requesting an explanation of his conduct. The artifice was then discovered; but not till the end had been answered of deceiving the Junta for a time, and thus preventing them from taking such measures for the relief of the place as might have been in their power.

Reille had expected to take Rosas by a sudden attack. The commandant of the engineers had served in that same capacity at the last siege, and was therefore well acquainted with the place and with its weakness. On the evening of the 9th a breach was made in the ramparts of the citadel sufficient for twenty men abreast; but it was so dark that the enemy did not discover the extent of the mischief. Immediate intelligence was sent to the ships; one of the bomb-vessels was then stationed where it could flank the breach, and the boats appointed to enfilade the shore with carronades, while more seamen were landed to repair the damage. British seamen are made of such materials, that it is indifferent to them on what service they are employed; whether at sea or ashore, whatever is to be done by courage, activity,

CHAP.
XVI.
1808.
November.

CHAP. intelligence, and strenuous exertion, they can accomplish. The
 XVI. Spaniards exerted themselves with emulous alacrity, and this,
 1808. against which the enemy had directed their fire as the weakest
 November. part of the works, was by their united labour placed in a re-
 spectable state of defence.

*Disposition
 of the Ita-
 lian troops
 to desert.*

Reille now found that neglected as Rosas had been, with its feeble works, its unsupported garrison, and its insufficient stores, it was necessary to proceed against it by regular siege. Some difficulties he encountered from the state of the weather, some from the sallies which were made to interrupt him; but his greatest uneasiness arose from the desertion of the Italians, which was so frequent as to leave no doubt that in case of any serious reverse the whole division would go over to the Spaniards. The state of durance in which the Pope was held had probably offended their religious feelings, and the Tuscans perhaps in their indignation for the treatment of the Queen of Etruria felt some sympathy with the Spaniards. But Buonaparte cared not for the hearts of men, so their hands were at his service and their lives at his disposal. And such are the effects of discipline, that the Italians, who when left to themselves are the worst troops in the world, became as efficient as the best soldiers in his army. One regiment at this siege was composed of subjects turned out from others, the refuse of the whole Italian army: example, encouragement, and restraint, made them behave well in the field, . . . and how they behaved out of it was a matter of indifference to their officers and the government which employed them. Two companies of Italians having been surrounded and made prisoners by the Somatenes, under an old man of seventy, (who had been a captain of Miquelets in the last war, and now acted under the orders of the Spanish commander, D. Juan Claros), St. Cyr gave orders to seize an equal number of the inhabitants, and send them into France; there to be confined till an exchange

should take place; and this he did to give a humaner character to the war, upon so brutal a system had it been carried on by his predecessors. His plea was that the peasantry had entrapped his troops by leading them astray; but the Catalans did not understand upon what principle he acted, and were more exasperated than if he had pursued the old system of burning their villages, because they believed that their countrymen were thus carried off as recruits for Buonaparte's armies in the north. Among the Italian prisoners was the wife of an officer who accompanied her husband in man's attire.

CHAP.
XVI.
1808.
November.

On the 16th the French attempted to carry Fort Trinidad by assault. They were repulsed; returning in greater strength, they forced the outer gate, and endeavoured to force the second; but here such a steady fire of musquetry and hand-grenades was kept up against them, that they retired a second time, leaving many of their men under the walls. Captain West expecting a third attack, reinforced the fort with a party of marines, who entered by means of a rope-ladder under an incessant fire. Nothing could be more cordial than the co-operation of the Spaniards and English at this time; but they were not strong enough to prevent the enemy from erecting batteries, which compelled the ships to keep at a distance, and a brave but unsuccessful attack from Gerona upon Souham's division on the Fluvia was the only effort made to relieve them: on that side the Spaniards would have done more had it not been for want of cavalry. There were two regiments in Tarragona with excellent horses, but so miserably in want of equipments, that it was impossible for them to take the field; there was no money to equip them, and while they were thus remaining inactive the enemy were overrunning the Ampurdan, and carrying on the siege of Rosas at their will, because the Spaniards had no cavalry to keep them in check. The French acted with a full knowledge of the Spaniards' embarrassments, and

*Attack upon
Fort Trini-
dad repulsed*

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

*November.**The French
establish
themselves
in the town.**They establish
themselves
in the town.**Lord Coch-
rane throws
himself into
Fort Trini-
dad.*

in full reliance upon the paralysing imbecility which such difficulties must needs produce; nevertheless St. Cyr was far from feeling at ease, knowing that Barcelona must fall unless it were speedily succoured, and that if the force which was now idly besieging it were brought to the relief of Rosas, Catalonia might speedily be cleared of its invaders, and Rousillon become in its turn the scene of invasion. It was therefore necessary to press the siege, the farthest day which had been appointed for his reaching Barcelona being past. During the night of the 27th an attack was made upon the town; the helpless part of the inhabitants had been removed by sea at the first approach of danger; there were about 500 men stationed there, some of whom were peasants, the others part of the garrison: they defended themselves with a courage to which the French, who are seldom just to their enemies, bore witness; but they were overpowered; about 300 fell, and hardly fifty escaped into the citadel. The conquerors immediately established batteries under cover of the houses, then set fire to the houses, and cut off the communication between the citadel and the fort. They rendered it also impossible for the English to communicate with the citadel. Captain West had at this time been superseded by Captain Bennett of the *Fame*; and when an officer from the *Marques de Lazan* came on board his ship with dispatches for the governor, some lives were lost in an unsuccessful attempt at landing him.

The citadel was soon in a desperate state, and the fort might have been considered so; for it was at this time battered in breach, and a passage to the lower bomb-proof being nearly effected, the marines of the *Fame* were withdrawn. At this juncture Lord Cochrane arrived in the *Imperieuse*. During the month of September this gallant officer with his single ship had kept the whole coast of Languedoc in alarm, destroyed the

newly-constructed semaphoric telegraphs (which were of the utmost consequence to the numerous coasting convoys of the French) at Bourdique, La Pinede, St. Maguire, Frontignan, Canet, and Foy; demolished fourteen barracks of the gens-d'armes; blown up a battery and the strong tower upon the lake of Frontignan; and not only prevented any troops from being sent from that province into Spain, but excited such dismay there, that 2000 men were drawn from Figueras to oppose him. The coasting trade was entirely suspended during this alarm; and with such consummate prudence were all his enterprises planned and executed, that not one of his men was either killed or hurt, except one, who was singed in blowing up the battery.

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November.

Lord Collingwood, with his wonted prudence, had entrusted Cochrane with discretionary orders to assist the Spaniards wherever it could be done with most probability of success, and he hastened to the Bay of Rosas as soon as he knew of the siege, . . . too late, and yet in time to signalize himself. Captain Bennett, though he had withdrawn his own men, did not alter Lord Collingwood's orders, and Cochrane threw himself into Fort Trinidad with eighty seamen and marines, at a time when the garrison, amounting to the same number, would else have surrendered, perceiving that further resistance had been thought unavailing by the English themselves. This garrison was changed, and the new men brought with them fresh hope and unexhausted strength. Cochrane formed a rampart within the breach of palisadoes and barrels, ships' hammock-cloths, awning, &c. filled with sand and rubbish; these supplied the place of walls and ditches. Sanson, the commandant of the engineers, pronounced the breach practicable. His opinion was relied on with the more confidence because he was well acquainted with the place; but the Captain who was ordered to lead the assault thought otherwise; he had been in the Spanish service, and in garrison

Gallant defence of the fort.

CHAP.
XVI.
1808.
December.

at that very fort, and he said that it was not possible to enter there; nevertheless he would make the attempt if he were ordered, with the certainty of perishing in it, and leading his party to destruction. Under such circumstances it requires more firmness to give the order than to obey, . . . but it is of a different kind. The order was given, and the officer perished as he had foreseen and foretold. Two of his companions escaped by the humanity of the English, who, instead of killing four men whose lives were at their mercy, suffered two to retire, while they drew up the others by a rope, to secure them as prisoners. When the breach had been rendered practicable, a more formidable assault was made. Lord Cochrane had prepared for it with that sportiveness by which English sailors are as much characterised as schoolboys. He not only stationed men with bayonets immediately within the breach, to give the assailants an immediate greeting, but he laid well-greased planks across the breach, upon which many of the French slipped and fell in endeavouring to pass; and he hung ropes there with fish-hooks fastened to them, by which not a few were caught in their retreat. The enemy suffered a severe loss on this occasion. There was in Lord Cochrane's conduct here, and in all places, that contempt of danger which in former ages would have been imputed to a reliance upon charms, and which never fails to inspire confidence. Once, while the besiegers were battering the fort, the Spanish flag fell into the ditch: he let himself down by a rope through a shower of balls to recover it, returned unhurt, and planted it again upon the walls. The citadel at length having been battered in breach till it was no longer tenable, capitulated, and the garrison, marching out with the honours of war, were sent prisoners* into France. Two thousand men, who had given

*The citadel
captured,
and the fort
evacuated.*

* St. Cyr (p. 50) reproaches the English for this, and says, '*Nous n'avions*

proof of steadiness and courage, were thus lost to Spain. Lord Cochrane then saw that any farther resistance in Fort Trinidad was impossible; and having maintained its shattered walls twelve days after they had been deemed untenable, he embarked all the men, and blew up the magazine.

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1808.
December.

The French had thus been detained a whole month before a neglected and ill-provided fortress. But the men who so often during this war heroically defended half-ruined works, had too much reason to feel how little it availed by their exertions to gain time for generals who knew not how to use it. By the French commanders every thing was calculated, . . . by the Spanish, nothing. On the day after the capitulation the conquerors marched from Rosas; on the next day the whole army was collected on the Fluvia, the cavalry having returned from France. The force disposable for the relief of Barcelona consisted of 15,000 foot and 1500 horse: more than twice their number might have been brought against them, besides the Miquelets, who were esteemed by the French themselves as the best light troops in Europe, and the whole peasantry, always remarkable

*St. Cyr
marches to
relieve Bar-
celona.*

jamaís espéré prendre à la vue, et sous le canon de l'escadre, une garnison forte encore d'environ 3000 hommes. Il aurait été possible aux Anglais, en plein jour, et sur-tout facile durant la nuit, d'embarquer la garnison, et de la transporter, en quelques heures, sur la rive droite de la Fluvia, en laissant seulement un faible détachement pour remettre la forteresse; comme cela s'était pratiqué, en Février, 1795, quand une escadre Espagnole occupait la baie. But in that siege the enemy were not masters of the town, and they had now established a battery in it to cut off the communication between the citadel and the ships, which was done so effectually, that five days before the surrender Captain Bennett found it impossible to land a single messenger there. M. St. Cyr adds, that when the prisoners defiled along the shore the English ships opened a brisk fire upon them, and that the Spaniards would never be persuaded that this was done in mistake. The Marshal was not upon the spot himself; if he had, this statement would not have appeared in his Journal.

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XVI.

1808.

December.

Dec. 12.

*He discovers a mountain path near Hostalrich.**Cabanès, p. ii. p. 92.*

for their hardihood, and now animated with a hatred of their invaders as intense as it was well-founded. To deceive an enemy who was easily deceived, St. Cyr manœuvred as if he intended to besiege Gerona. One precaution, and one only, had been effectually taken by the Spaniards: they had broken up the road along the coast, so as to render it impracticable, and any attempt at repairing it must have been made under the guns of the English squadron. Hostalrich commanded the other road, but this was not passable for artillery. He sent back his guns and his ammunition waggons to Figueras, and having reached La Bisbal, distributed to every soldier four days' biscuit and fifty cartridges, and with no farther ammunition than ten rounds per man more, which were carried upon mules, set off to force his way to Barcelona, sure of well storing it when he arrived there from the magazines of the besiegers.

Claros, who saw the enemy debouche from La Bisbal, dispatched immediate intelligence to General Vives, and taking a position with his Miquelets and a party of Somatenes at Col de la Grange, opposed their march. If this system had been well followed up, the French must soon have expended their cartridges; but every thing had been concerted on their part, and with the Spaniards in their multitude of counsellors there was neither concert nor wisdom; and so well were the French prepared, that they were better acquainted with the country than the Spaniards themselves. In passing near Palamos they received some shot from the English ships; it was the only part of the route they had chosen which exposed them to this danger. They encamped that night in the Val de Aro. The destination of the army could then no longer be concealed; still it was of importance to keep the Spaniards in doubt concerning its course, and St. Cyr profited by every hour which they passed in indecision. The next day he arrived at Vidreras. Lazan's troops were seen behind

them, to the right, on the heights of Casa de la Selva; and on the 14th some skirmishing took place near Mallorquinas between these troops and the rear of the French. This gave them little interruption, and no alarm: what St. Cyr apprehended was, that he should find Vives upon the Tordera, a strong position, where some bodies of Miquelets and peasantry, well posted, might have made him expend his ammunition, and easily have frustrated his design; but it was the fate of the Spaniards now never to profit by the opportunities which were offered them. Passing by Masanet and Martorell de la Selva, upon the heights which command Hostalrich, he halted his right at Grions and his left at Masanes, while search was made for a mountain path, which leading out of reach of shot from the fortress, comes into the Barcelona road beyond it. A man who had formerly kept sheep in these parts had assured him that such a path existed, in opposition to the statement of all the smugglers whom St. Cyr consulted before he left Perpignan, and it was in reliance upon his single but sure testimony that this course was taken. The officers of the staff went to look for it, and returned exhausted with fatigue, declaring that no such path was there. St. Cyr then, who had full reliance upon his informant, set out himself, and after two hours' search discovered it, but in the attempt he had nearly fallen into the hands of a party of Somatenes.

By this path, on the 15th, the French succeeded in passing Hostalrich; they started at day-break, and had just regained the high road when the garrison, having discovered the way which they had taken, came out and annoyed their rear. In the course of the day they lost about two hundred men by repeated attacks of the Miquelets: and the troops, harassed by these skirmishes and by a fatiguing march, in which they had to cross many torrents, would fain have halted for the night when they arrived at Puente de la Tordera. The defile of Treinta-pasos was before

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.

CHAP. them, six miles in length, and St. Cyr knew that if they did not
 XVI. pass it that night, they must fight their way through on the
 1808. morrow. He urged them forward therefore, leaving a handful
 December. of men at the entrance, to keep the Miquelets in check. The
 Spaniards had endeavoured to impede the way by breaking up
 the road and felling trees across it: but they had neglected
 to occupy this important pass, and by eleven o'clock the whole
 of the French army bivouacuated on the plain a league from
 Llinas.

*St. Cyr,
 52—63.*

*Indecision
 of General
 Vives.*

General Vives, during the whole time that the French were before Rosas, had been occupied with the insane purpose of laying regular siege to Barcelona. From this dream he was disturbed by advices from Gerona that the firing at Rosas had ceased; and any hope which might have remained was soon put an end to by certain intelligence of its surrender from the British squadron. The Spanish Commander had taken none of the ordinary means for obtaining information of the enemy's movements; he knew as little of their strength as of their plans: he was ill acquainted with the country, and the persons by whom he was surrounded were utterly ignorant of military affairs, and might have perplexed a firmer spirit and a clearer understanding, by their contrarious and vacillating counsels. It was a moment at which a blow might have been struck not less momentous than the battle of Baylen; for the destruction of St. Cyr's army (and destruction must have been the consequence of defeat) would have drawn after it the recovery of Barcelona and Figueras, and effectual assistance might then have been afforded to Zaragoza. But the unreasonable hopes which he had long indulged were followed by an ominous prostration of mind. Fretted as well as embarrassed by want of money; alarmed by tidings of the rout at Tudela, and of the appearance of the enemy again before Zaragoza; still more alarmed by re-

ceiving no advices from the side of Madrid, and therefore with too much reason apprehending the worst, he had no government to look to for orders, no reliance upon others, and none upon himself. Four days were wasted in hopeless indecision; then came intelligence at midnight from the Junta at Gerona that St. Cyr was on his march, and, having sent his artillery to Figueras, it was evident that Barcelona was his object. Immediately General Reding was dispatched with his division, consisting of about 4000 men, to oppose him. Succeeding advices left no doubt of the direction of the French; a council of war was held; Caldagues was of opinion that the General should march against the enemy with the greater part of his force, leaving only enough to keep up the blockade: he took however not more than 5000 with him, and, having dispatched instructions to the Marques de Lazan, followed Reding, and having joined him at Granollers, set out from that place at midnight just when the French had passed without opposition through the defile of Treinta-pasos: the Spaniards as they left Granollers saw the fires of the enemy's bivouac.

The intention was to occupy an advantageous position between Villalba and Llinas: the artillery and the want of order in some of the raw troops impeded their march; it was morning when the head of the column arrived at Cardedeu, and before Vives could reach the ground which he had intended to take he came in sight of the enemy, and his men, after a night march of eight hours, had to draw up for battle. The French were refreshed by rest: but they had consumed their biscuit, and so much of their ammunition had been expended in skirmishing with the Miquelets, that what remained would not have been sufficient for an hour in action. St. Cyr had formed them in one column at day-break. When the Spanish artillery began to play upon the head of that column, Pino, of whose division it

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.

Dec. 11.

*He marches
against the
French.*Dec. 15.
Cabañes,
p. 9. c. 11.*Rout of the
Spaniards
at Llinas.*

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.

was composed, sent an aide-de-camp, to ask if any change was to be made in the dispositions for battle. St. Cyr's reply was, "We have neither time nor means to make dispositions. In this covered country it would take at least three hours to reconnoitre the enemy well, . . in less than two, Lazan might arrive to attack us in the rear, and Milans might fall upon our left. We have not a minute to lose; but must bring our whole force to bear upon the centre of their line." Notwithstanding these orders, the first brigade deployed, and attacking the left of Reding's division suffered considerably, and began to give way. St. Cyr, when he saw his orders disobeyed, instructed Pino to execute his original plan with the second brigade, and, changing the direction of Souham's division, sent it to turn General Reding's right. Two battalions were ordered to make a false attack upon the left of the Spanish position. Here the rout began. The centre was forced at the same time; and Vives and his staff, seeing all hope lost on that side, hastened to the right, where the advantage had hitherto appeared to be with Reding. But they carried panic with them; Souham's division decided the battle in that quarter with equal celerity, and the steadiness with which some of the old troops behaved was not supported well enough to save the Spaniards from a total and scandalous defeat. It was eight o'clock when they formed for action, and before nine they were in full flight. General Vives lost his horse, and, escaping on foot across the mountains, reached Mataro, and got on board a vessel. There was an end of all order: officers and men shifted as they could, each for himself. One column alone under Colonel Ybarrola retreated unbroken; and two out of fourteen guns were brought off by a Sub-lieutenant named Uzurrun. Reding, who had been saved by the speed of his horse from close pursuit, fell in with these at Mommalo, rallied what fugitives could be collected, and retreated with them by S. Culgat, across the Llobregat to Molins

de Rey. The artillery had been well served, and the French loss by their own account amounted to 600 men. Of the Spaniards 2000 are said to have been taken, of whom 800 were wounded. Their killed were about 400. The loss in men was trifling, for the fugitives dispersed in all directions, and the conquerors wasted no time in pursuit: but the most favourable opportunity which presented itself to the Spaniards during the whole war was lost, . . the opportunity of cutting off a second French army, which would have drawn after it the recovery of Barcelona, and a second deliverance of Zaragoza.

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.

Cabañes,
p. 3. c. 11.
St. Cyr,
63—70.

The firing was heard at Barcelona, from whence Duhesme, seeing so large a part of the besieging force drawn off, sallied against the remainder: he was bravely received, and repulsed at all points. But when night came, Caldagues, who had been left in the command, hearing the fatal issue of the battle, withdrew behind the Llobregat, removing almost the whole of his artillery, but leaving copious magazines which Vives, with that want of discretion that characterized all his conduct, had collected at Sarrea, and which it was now impossible to save. The retreat was effected without molestation; but so miserable a scene had not for many generations been witnessed in Catalonia. The country around Barcelona was one of the most flourishing and delightful parts of the whole kingdom, bearing every mark of industry and opulence and comfort. The whole population of that vicinity followed the retreat, men, women, and children carrying upon their backs such effects as they could bear, and leaving all the rest to the spoilers. The nuns of three convents were among the fugitives: about an hundred of these poor women were so advanced in years that they were hardly able to walk, . . since childhood they had never been beyond the walls of their cloister, and now they were thus driven abroad into the world. Reding had reached Molins de Rey at midnight, and by great exertions

Retreat of
the Spani-
ards from
Barcelona
to the Llo-
bregat.

CHAP. restoring some order among the troops which he had collected
 XVI. in his flight, took a position upon the heights that command
 1808. the bridge.

December.

*St. Cyr
 marches
 against
 them.
 Dec. 17.*

Dec. 20.

St. Cyr entered Barcelona on the following morning, ill satisfied with Duhesme for not having interposed to cut off the fugitives; and still more displeased when he found that the distress of the garrison for provisions had been greatly exaggerated, and that in consequence of these false representations he had been compelled to undertake a march so perilous that nothing but the gross incapacity of his opponents could have saved the army from * destruction. He rested his men three days, and on the fourth took a position on the left bank of the Llobregat in face of the Spaniards, that they might have no time to strengthen themselves in the advantageous post which they occupied, nor to be joined by the troops under Lazan and Milans. But these officers had no intention of joining; and Reding, upon whom the temporary command had devolved, was less able than a Spaniard would have been to struggle with the difficulties in which he found himself. A Spanish General would neither have foreseen defeat nor have been cast down by it; he would have thought a change of fortune as likely as a change of weather; he would have relied upon the Saints and the Virgin, his good cause and

* The officers were so aware of their danger, that Cabañes heard one of the staff say they should certainly have believed it was their General's intention to betray them to the enemy, . . if they had not had the most entire confidence in him. It seems indeed probable that Buonaparte, not foreseeing what the consequences of a defeat in Catalonia would be, would have thought the disgrace or destruction of a general whom he disliked a compensation for the loss of this army.

General Duhesme perished in the flight from Waterloo: the stain of his blood was pointed out to me on the threshold of the inn at Genap, where he was cut down by a Brunswicker.

the insuperable constancy of his countrymen. But Reding saw only the fearful realities of his situation; he knew that his own knowledge of the art of war was of no avail when he could depend neither upon officers nor men; and his sole hope was, that a speedy and honourable death might remove him from the sight of calamities which he deemed it impossible to avert. A more pitiable condition cannot be conceived, . . . except that of the brave and honourable men employed against him, who from a sense of military duty served with their utmost efforts a cause which they knew to be infamously unjust, and acting in obedience to a merciless tyrant with miscreants worthy of such a master, aided and abetted crimes at which their hearts revolted . . . sinning thus against God and man, against the light of conscience and against their own souls.

On the second day after the rout, Vives, who had landed at Sitges, appeared upon the Llobregat, and having approved of Reding's dispositions, left him in the command while he went to Villafranca to take measures with the Junta for calling out the whole peasantry of the country, and for reuniting the dispersed troops. There was the difficult task of providing for the army, . . . their magazines had been abandoned to the enemy, and they were in a country which now for six months had been the immediate scene of war. They were without clothes and without shelter, and a piercing wind from the mountains swept down the valley of the Llobregat. While they were employed in felling trees and erecting huts, the alarm was given that the French were taking a position in front of them. The men were immediately placed under arms, and dispositions were made for maintaining a post strong in itself, and defended by numerous artillery. But it was soon perceived that the attack would not be made that day. St. Cyr fixed his head quarters in the centre at San Feliu, having his left at Cornella and his right at Molins

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.*Indecision
of the Spa-
niards.
Dec. 18.**Dec. 20.*

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.

de Rey. He saw by the movements of the Spaniards that they expected the main attack would be at that place, by the bridge over which the high road passes to Tarragona, and a little way beyond branches off to Zaragoza. They had in fact made such preparations that it was impossible for the French to debouch there while the point was defended with any resolution. St. Cyr therefore ordered General Chabran to draw their attention thither during the night, and not to make any real attempt till he should see both the centre and the right of the enemy turned: for the river was fordable in several places, and the Spaniards with strange improvidence had taken no means for rendering it impassable in those points. Indeed as soon as they were satisfied that the attack was delayed till the morning, Reding held a council of war in his tent; and all who were present agreed that considering the temper of the troops after their late defeat, it would be imprudent to hazard another engagement... Some were for retreating to Ordal, and occupying a position there;... it was not so defensible as that which they proposed to abandon; but to men in their state of mind it seemed better, because it was at a distance: others were for retiring at once to Tarragona, where the army might be re-organized in safety. Reding himself thought it certainly advisable to retreat: but he who had no fear of death was miserably afraid of responsibility; and wanting resolution to act upon his own judgement, dispatched a courier to solicit instructions from General Vives, who was seven leagues off. Night came on; the troops were under arms, exposed to severe cold and snow; the fires of both armies were seen along their whole lines;... an alarm was kept up at the bridge by Chabran's division, and from time to time the Spanish batteries fired where they saw any movement on the opposite bank. At midnight no answer from Vives had arrived; and Reding, not

doubting that it would confirm the opinion of the council, issued orders that the troops should be in readiness to commence their retreat as soon as it came. But Vives also sought to shift the responsibility from himself; and when his answer arrived, which was not till four in the morning, its purport was, that Reding was to retire to Ordal if he could not maintain himself on the Llobregat. Reding now felt that the night had been lost in this ruinous indecision, and finding the responsibility which he dreaded thrown back upon him, deemed it better to die where he was than commence a retreat with the certainty of being instantly and closely pursued. He made this determination known to the officers who were about his person, exhorting them to do their duty like true Spaniards, and die in defence of their country: they shook hands with him in pledge of their promise, and in this temper waited for the attack.

CHAP.
XVI.1808.
December.*Cabañes,*
p. 3. c. 12.

At break of morning on the shortest day in the year, the left wing of the French under General Souham forded the river at St. Juan d'Espi, and ascended the right bank to protect the centre, which in like manner crossed in a line from St. Feliu, opposite to the right of the Spaniards. The first brigade of the centre effected its passage before any such intention was perceived or apprehended by their opponents. The Spaniards could have given no greater proof of negligence than in leaving undefended points which were so easily defensible, and upon which the security of their position depended; but in making dispositions as soon as they discovered the enemy's movements, they evinced a degree of skill which convinced the French that there were officers among them who would have been formidable antagonists had they commanded troops upon whom they could have relied. The first brigade, however, was in time to establish itself with little opposition upon the heights of Llors and S. Coloma; the second followed, and placed itself at the foot of

Dec. 21.

The Spaniards routed,
and pursued to Tarra-
гона.

CHAP. XVI. those heights, masked, in column, and ready to debouch. Chabot's troops crossed at the same ford, and marched to the left of the others, with the intention of turning the Spaniards' right. 1808. The effect of these movements was, that the Spanish troops, December. dismayed, as their officers had anticipated, by the late reverses, easily gave way: the right was driven back behind the centre; that being attacked also, was thrown back upon the left toward the bridge; their retreat upon Villa Franca was cut off by Chabot: a detachment from the French right, which had crossed at a ford above the bridge, intercepted them also on the way to Martorell; and if Chabran had then forced the passage of the bridge, they would have been beset on all sides, and driven together for slaughter like wild beasts at a royal hunt in the East. Chabran, however, not willing to expose his men to a loss which might be spared, waited till Souham's troops arrived on the opposite bank, and then debouched from the bridge. There are no troops in the world except the Spaniards, says St. Cyr, who could have escaped from such a situation. They did it by abandoning every thing, and flying every man his own way. General Reding and the officers who had pledged themselves to die with him in maintaining the position had not even an opportunity of dying afforded them, unless they had sought it like suicides. The country being craggy, wooded, and full of ravines, favoured the fugitives, so that during an active pursuit of fifteen hours not more than some 1100 prisoners were taken. Caldagues was among them, and the good service which he had performed in relieving Gerona did not exempt him now from a suspicion of having betrayed the Spaniards in favour of his countrymen. The pursuit was followed to the very gates of Tarragona, and some of the fugitives did not stop till they reached the Ebro. All the artillery, consisting of 50 pieces of cannon, was taken; and large magazines of ammunition were

found at Villa Franca, to the great relief of the French, who had not enough in Barcelona for a month's consumption. Chabran's division established itself at Martorell, Chabot's at S. Sadurni, Souham's at Vendrell and upon the left bank of the Gaya, Pino's at Villa Franca, Villa Nueva, and Sitjas. St. Cyr fixed his head-quarters at Villa Franca. Thus far he had completely succeeded in whatever he had proposed: . . . there was no longer an army in the field to oppose him; Barcelona was not only relieved, but stored and rendered secure; and Zaragoza (which in a moral if not a military point of view was an object of more importance) was precluded from all succour in that quarter, from whence alone an effectual effort might reasonably have been expected.

CHAP.
XVI.

1808.

December.St. Cyr,
82—88.
Cabañes,
p. 3. c. 12.

1808.

December.

The Span.

which was

the principal

of the war.

CHAPTER XVII.

MOVEMENTS OF THE CENTRAL ARMY UNDER THE DUKE DEL
 INFANTADO. BATTLE OF UCLES. RETREAT FROM CU-
 ENCA. CARTAOJAL APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND. PRO-
 GRESS OF THE FRENCH. SIR ROBERT WILSON ENTERS
 CIUDAD RODRIGO. NEGOTIATION CONCERNING THE AD-
 MISSION OF BRITISH TROOPS INTO CADIZ.

1808.

December.

*The Spa-
niards not
discouraged
by their re-
verses.*

SIR John Moore's movements, fatal as they were to his army and himself, and most injurious to public opinion in England, were not without some good effect, though far inadequate to the price at which it was purchased. They drew into Galicia those forces which would otherwise have taken possession of Lisbon and of Seville, and they afforded the Junta time for raising new levies and bringing new armies into the field. The spirit of the nation was in no degree abated; their numerous defeats, the loss of their capital, and the treachery of chiefs in whom they had entirely trusted, seemed rather to exasperate than dismay them; and there would have been no lack of strength had there been arms for the willing people, officers to discipline them, a government which could have provided for their support, and generals capable of directing their zeal and courage. A memorable instance of the national disposition was displayed in the little town of Luzena. According to a decree of the Junta, four men of every hundred were to be drawn for military service; all who were liable to the lot assembled, 400 in number, and when the magistrate was proceeding to ballot for

sixteen, the whole 400 volunteered, and marched off that same day to join the troops at Seville.

Had the British army made a stand in Galicia, as there was every reason to expect, the Duke del Infantado was to have advanced from Cuenca upon Ocaña and Aranjuez, and in conjunction with the army collected at La Carolina, under the Marques del Palacio, to have pushed for Madrid. The retreat of Sir John Moore frustrated this plan; the Duke was then ordered to remain on the defensive, and new levies were sent to reinforce him as fast as they were raised. But in the miserable circumstances of his army, increase of numbers was no increase of strength. Arms, clothing, and provision were wanting; it was alike without resources, discipline, or system; in want of efficient officers of every rank, and those which there were, were divided into cabals and factions. The province of Cuenca was the best point which could have been chosen for deriving supplies from La Mancha, Murcia, and Valencia, the two latter provinces as yet unexhausted by the war; but it was not a military position. The city stands upon high ground, where the Huecar falls into the Jucar at the skirts of Monte de S. Christobal, and it is completely commanded by the heights. All that the Duke could hope for in case he were attacked was to secure his retreat, and for this purpose he occupied some eminences on the left bank of the Huecar, leaving the road to Valencia by Moya open for his artillery. The van was stationed at Jabaya, four leagues from Cuenca, in the direction of Madrid.

The Duke had acquired some reputation in the former war with France when serving as Colonel of a regiment which he had raised himself. He had now given the highest proof of devotion to his country, in accepting a command under circumstances which rendered success absolutely impossible, and yet where any disaster would compromise his reputation, and

CHAP.
XVII.

1808.
December.

*Condition of
Infantado's
army at
Cuenca.*

*Infantado,
Manifesto,
32—37.*

CHAP. expose him to the suspicion and fury of his own soldiers.
 XVII. In endeavouring to restore order among the troops, and to
 1808. obtain food and clothing for them, he was indefatigable ; no man
 December. could have exerted himself with greater activity and zeal. The
 condition of his army indeed, officers as well as men, was
 pitiable. The military chest having been taken to Zaragoza,
 they were without pay ; and a great proportion of those who
 had endured the fatigue and sufferings of the retreat were now
 sinking under the effects. They lay upon straw, half-naked,
 in that severe season, and in the keen climate of that high coun-
 try, .. hundreds were perishing thus. The Duke established
 hospitals, collected beds from the city and from all the places
 within reach, appointed officers to the sole charge of seeing that
 the sick were supplied, and ordered the friars to attend upon
 them. His authority was exerted as far as it would extend, and
 when that failed, he begged for their support. These exertions
 were not without effect ; the progress of disease was stopped,
 men and stores were obtained, subordination was restored, and
 with little efficient strength there was the appearance as well as
 the name of an army.

Infantado,
42—44.

*Dreams of
offensive
operations.*

The Spaniards were not sensible how low they had fallen as a
 military people. Remembering what they had been, no lessons,
 however severe, could make them see themselves as they were ; and
 this error was not confined to the multitude ; it was partaken by
 all ranks, and seemed, indeed, inherent in the national character.
 It was an error which exposed their armies always to defeat,
 and yet as a nation rendered them invincible ; .. the French
 could have invaded no people whom it would have been so easy
 to rout, none whom it was so impossible to subdue. Infantado
 had his full share of this delusion ; he planned extensive and
 combined operations, such as required good troops, intelligent
 officers, and ready means ; .. he thought of relieving Zaragoza, ..

of recovering Madrid ; or of pursuing the left wing of that army which was then employed against the English ; . . and this with men and leaders whose incapacity was manifest upon every occasion. Upon intelligence that about 1500 French cavalry were scouring the country on both sides of the Tagus, and plundering great part of the provinces of Cuenca and La Mancha, he concerted a scheme for surprising them at Aranjuez and Tarancon, sending Venegas with 4000 foot and 800 horse to attack them in the latter place, while D. Antonio de Senra, with an equal force of foot and 1000 horse, was to fall upon Aranjuez, overcome the enemy there, and intercept those who would retreat thither in their endeavour to escape from Tarancon. The attempt failed, wholly through mismanagement. Senra stopped short at El Horcajo, in fear of a detachment of French cavalry at Villanueva del Cardete, though that force had been calculated upon in the combinations of Infantado. The division with Venegas lost their way in the night and the snow ; some went in one direction, some in another, . . the cavalry who were thus separated had no directions how to act ; and the infantry, instead of surprising the enemy in Tarancon, were themselves surprised by them. There were, however, some good troops among them, who stood firm, and the French, being very inferior in number, retreated with some loss to Aranjuez.

CHAP.
XVII.1808.
December.*Movement
against the
French at
Tarancon
frustrated.**Infantado,
45—55.**Dec. 25.**Venegas
falls back
from Ta-
rancon to
Ucles.*

This failure had the ill effect of creating discord among the Spaniards. Infantado blamed the commanders ; they reproached the officers under them ; and both were willing to excuse themselves by supposing that what had failed in the execution had been planned unskilfully. Yet, as some advantage had been gained, the Duke resolved to pursue it . . The left bank being now cleared as far as Aranjuez, he hoped to take possession of that point and of Ocaña, and as in that rainy season the Tagus was nowhere fordable, his purpose was to remove the boats,

CHAP. break down the bridges, and place himself at Toledo. Venegas
 XVII. therefore was ordered to canton his troops in Tarancon, Ucles,
 1809. and the neighbouring villages, preparatory to this movement,
 and his force was increased to 8000 foot and 1900 horse, . . the
 commander-in-chief retaining with himself about 10,000, of whom
 a third part were without arms, and a considerable number
 otherwise unfit for service. This was their position at the begin-
 1809. ning of the year. Of what was passing in other parts they were
 ill-informed, and the false reports which abound in such times
 were always on the favourable side. They believed the French
 in Madrid were in hourly fear that this army would appear before
 the capital ; and that Romana had entirely destroyed the enemy
 at Guadarama. Some movements, however, on the part of the
 French about Aranjuez made Venegas resolve to fall back from
 Tarancon upon Ucles. He apprehended that it was their in-
 tention to attack the part of his force which was stationed at this
 latter place, and he resolved therefore to march his troops thither
 as a better position than Tarancon, and one where he might
 cover the army.

*Rout of the
 Spaniards
 at Ucles.*

Ucles is a decayed town, where the Knights of Santiago had
 their chief convent in the bright ages of that military order : here
 their banner was kept which Gregory XI. had blessed, and which
 the Kings of Spain delivered to every new master on his ap-
 pointment : hither the knights from all the other provinces re-
 sorted when their services were required, and from hence they
 had set forth for the conquest of Cordoba, and Seville, and Jaen,
 and Murcia. To a Spaniard of these times it was a melancholy
 place, for the proud as well as the mournful recollections which
 it recalled ; for here Alonso VI. had lost his only son, in the most
 disastrous defeat that the Christians had ever suffered from the
 Moors since the destruction of the kingdom of the Goths. He
 fell in battle with the Almoravides ; and because seven Counts

had died bravely in defending the Infante, the African fanatics, in their insolent triumph, called the spot where they fell the Place of the Seven Swine. This ill-omened ground was now to become the scene of an action disgraceful to the Spaniards for the facility with which they were routed, and infamous to the French for the enormous wickedness with which they abused their victory.

CHAP.
XVII.
1809.
January.

Venegas supposed that the French were bringing forces against him across the Tagus, by the ferry at Villamanrique. His danger was from a different quarter. Victor had marched from Toledo against Infantado's army, knowing as little of the Spaniards' movements as they did of his, but with such troops, that his only anxiety was to find the enemy, and bring them to action wherever they might be found. Victor himself, with General Ruffin's division, went by way of Alcazar, and General Villate, taking the direction of Ucles, discovered the Spaniards there on the morning of the 13th. Venegas apprehended an attack on his right, or in the rear; but the French crossed the brook, and fell upon the left wing of the Spaniards, who were stationed upon some high and broken ground, commanding the convent and the town. If the general erred in not strengthening this position, the troops allowed him no time for remedying his error; they retreated precipitately to the town, and when orders came to occupy the convent it was too late; . . . the enemy were within the enclosure, and fired from thence, as under cover of a parapet. The panic presently spread, the raw levies disordered those who would have done their duty, and many officers made a brave but vain sacrifice of their own lives in endeavouring to rally and encourage the men. The fugitives in one direction came upon the enemy's artillery, under General Cenar-mont, and were cut down with grape-shot; in another they fell in with Victor and the remaining part of the French army. One

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*Rocca, p.
79.*

*Cruelties
committed
there by the
French.*

body, under D. Pedro Agustin Giron, seeing that all was lost, made their way desperately through the enemy in good order, and got to Carrascosa, where they found the Duke. It was a series of errors on the part of the Spaniards, and the consequences were as disastrous as they could be. The French boasted of having taken 300 officers and 12,000 men, . . the whole force, however, which Venegas had with him did not amount to this, but the loss was very great. The prisoners were marched to Madrid, and such as fell by the way from hunger and exhaustion were shot by their inhuman captors.

Never indeed did any men heap upon themselves more guilt and infamy than those by whom this easy conquest was obtained. The inhabitants of Ucles had taken no part in the action; from necessity they could only be passive spectators of the scene. But they had soon cause to lament that they had not rather immolated their wives and children with their own hands, like the Numantians of old, and then rushed upon the invaders to sweeten death with vengeance, instead of submitting to the mercy of such enemies. Plunder was the first object of the French, and in order to make the townspeople discover where their valuables were secreted, they tortured them. When they had thus obtained all the portable wealth of the place, they yoked the inhabitants like beasts, choosing especially the clergy for this outrage, loaded them with their own furniture, and made them carry it to the Castle Hill, and pile it in heaps, where they set fire to it, and consumed the whole. They then in mere wantonness murdered above threescore persons, dragging them to the shambles, that this butchery might be committed in its proper scene. Several women were among these sufferers, and they might be regarded as happy in being thus delivered from the worse horrors that ensued: for the French laid hands on the surviving women of the place, amounting to some three hundred,

.. they tore the nun from the altar, the wife from her husband's corpse, the virgin from her mother's arms, and they abused these victims of the foulest brutality, till many of them expired on the spot. This was not all,.. but the farther atrocities which these monsters perpetrated cannot even be hinted at without violating the decencies of language and the reverence which is due to humanity. These unutterable things were committed in open day, and the officers made not the slightest attempt at restraining the wretches under their command; they were employed in securing the best part of the plunder for themselves. The Spanish government published the details of this wickedness, in order that if the criminals escaped earthly punishment, they might not escape perpetual infamy.

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*Gazeta del
Gobierno,
April 24,
1809.*

Infantado was severely censured for exposing his advanced guard fourteen leagues from his head-quarters, so that support was impossible; and an equal want of judgement had been shown by Venegas in not falling back upon the main body, which he knew was actually on the way to join him. The Duke left Cuenca on the morning preceding the action, and took up his quarters that night at Horcajada. Desirous to know for what reason Venegas had retreated from Tarancon, he rode forward on the 13th with his aides-de-camp, and when he reached Carrascosa, which is a league and half from Ucles, some carriers informed him that as they were leaving that town they heard firing at the outposts. Part of his troops were at Carrascosa; they had heard nothing; and the Duke was preparing to sit down to table with their general, the Conde de Orgaz, when news came that horse and foot were approaching in disorder. Immediately he mounted and rode forward; the first person whom he met was the commandant of the light troops, D. Francisco Copons y Navia, an officer in whom he had great confidence: seeing him without his battalion,

*Infantado
collects the
fugitives.*

CHAP. he knew that some fatal blow must have been sustained, and
 XVII. asking what had happened, was told that the troops at Ucles
 1809. were all either killed or taken. His first impulse was to rush
January. forward, and throw himself upon the enemy's bayonets. A timely
 thought of duty withheld him from this act of desperation. The
 troops under Giron, who had fought their way through the French,
 came up now in good order; with these and with such fugitives
 as could be brought together, he made dispositions which checked
 the pursuit in this direction, and retired when the evening was
 closing to Horcajada. They rested there during the early part
 of the night, and setting forward at three in the morning,
 reached the Venta de las Cabrejas before daybreak.

Infantado,
 119—132.

Retreat
from Cu-
enca.

Here, while the troops were receiving their rations, the generals held a council whether they should retreat to the borders of Valencia, and take up a position for the defence of that kingdom, which was threatened on the side of Daroca; or join the Marques del Palacio in La Mancha, and if compelled, fall back to La Carolina or Despeña-Perros; or march for Zaragoza, to attack the besiegers, and raise the siege. This was gravely proposed; but the madness of making such an attempt with an unprovided, undisciplined, routed army, dispirited by a long series of disasters, and above all, by the scandalous defeat of the preceding day, was universally acknowledged. The scheme of joining Palacio, and making for the Sierra Morena, was likewise rejected, because in the plains of La Mancha they would be exposed to the enemy's cavalry; and it was resolved without a dissentient voice to retreat into Valencia, where there were great resources for refitting and increasing the troops. This being determined, the army reached Cuenca that night, and continued its retreat on the following morning, the artillery being sent off in the middle of the night by a better road, to join them at Almodovar del Pinar. But four-and-twenty hours of the heaviest

rain rendered this road also impassable; and in spite of every exertion the greater number of the guns could not be got farther than Olmedilla, one league from Cuenca, by the following midnight, and there the escort left them. The Duke, who was with the artillery himself, in hope of expediting the most difficult part of their movements, had preceded them to Tortola, where a few of the guns had arrived, and whither the rest were to be brought next day, the worst part of the road being past. He sent orders therefore that one regiment of horse and another of foot should be dispatched to Tortola, for the purpose of escorting the artillery when it should be thus brought together, and went himself to join the army at Valera de arriba. On his arrival there on the evening of the 16th he found that no infantry had been sent; being barefooted and exhausted by marching in such weather, they had been deemed actually incapable of the service. Presently advice arrived that a company of the Ordenes Militares, which he had left at Tortola, had thought proper to leave the place immediately after his departure: that a party of enemy's cavalry had come up, and that the regiment of dragoons at the very sound of the French trumpets had taken flight, abandoning the guns to them. He now ordered a battalion of infantry and the Farnese regiment of dragoons to hasten and retake them: the night was dark, the distance considerable, the roads in the worst imaginable state; and when at daybreak they came to Tortola, scarcely an hundred infantry could be mustered, the rest having lost the way, or dispersed. The dragoons behaved well, and twice made themselves masters of the guns, but to no purpose; they were embedded in the soil too deeply to be removed at once; and while they were vainly labouring there, reinforcements came up to the enemy, and many brave men were sacrificed before the regiment desisted from the attempt at saving these guns, which with such exertions had been

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January.*Loss of the
artillery.*

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brought thither from Tudela. Infantado knew that any farther effort, considering the state of his army, must be hopeless, and would moreover expose him to the imminent danger of having his retreat cut off, for one column of the enemy appeared to be taking the direction of Almodovar; and in fact when the Duke reached that place, it was ascertained that they were within three leagues of it. After a few hours' rest therefore he ordered the retreat to be continued to La Motilla del Palancar, near Alarcon; and being, however unfortunate as a commander, willing to perform a soldier's part to the last, took his station with his own family and his orderly dragoons, as an outpost, within three miles of the enemy. This had an excellent effect upon the troops; so many indeed had deserted since the rout at Ucles, that few perhaps remained except those who acted upon a sense of duty, and their movements were now conducted with more composure. Infantado remained at La Motilla till he was assured that the French had turned aside from the pursuit; removing then to Albacete and Chinchilla, he gave his troops a few days' necessary rest, and issued directions for the better observance of discipline and order.

*Infantado,
133—141.*

*Infantado
frustrates a
movement
of the enemy
against the
Carolina
army.*

On the 25th the army moved to Hellin and Tobarra, the object being to cover Murcia, call off the attention of the enemy from Valencia, and receive reinforcements from both those kingdoms and from Andalusia. Infantado was more enterprising and more hopeful than some of the generals under his command, who would have had him retreat to the city of Murcia, there to refit his troops, or take shelter even at Carthagená. The minister at war submitted to his consideration whether it would not be advisable to take up a position between the Peñas de S. Pedro and Carcelén, for the purpose of communicating with the Sierra Morena by the Sierra de Alcaraz. This the Duke thought a bad position in itself, even if it were not in a desert, and with-

out water; and as he had ascertained that Victor was moving upon Villar-robledo with the intention of cutting off the vanguard of the Carolina army at Villarta, he took measures for averting a blow, which, if it had succeeded, would have left the passes of the Sierra Morena open to the enemy. It had been intended that this detachment, consisting of 5000 men, should have co-operated with him in his projected movement upon Toledo, which had been so fatally frustrated at Ucles; they were therefore under his command. He now sent orders that they should instantly retire to S. Cruz de Mudela, or to El Viso; and while he hastened thither himself to join them, sent off 500 horse, divided into four parties, to act as *guerillas* in the rear of the French. They did this with great success, imposing upon them by their rapidity and boldness: and the Duke by forced marches reached S. Cruz de Mudela in time to save the Carolina troops, the enemy having just arrived in front of them. The French, seeing a force which they had not expected, and were not in strength to attack, retired toward Toledo, leaving the open country to the Spaniards: and Infantado then communicated with General Cuesta, that he might act in concert with the army of Extremadura.

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Infantado,
180—189.

The troops had now recovered heart; the advanced guard, under the Duque del Alburquerque, gained some advantage at Mora, where, by a well-planned expedition, he surprised the French; and Infantado thought that he had performed no inconsiderable service to his country, in having gathered up the wreck of the central army, and brought it into an efficient state, when he received an order from the Supreme Junta to give up the command to the Conde de Cartaojal. He obeyed reluctantly, and with the feelings of an injured man. The government at that time perhaps, like the people, attributed too large a part of their disasters to the generals, and therefore appointed and dis-

Infantado
superseded
by Cartao-
jal.
Feb. 18.

Feb. 6.

CHAP. placed them upon no better ground than that of complying with
 XVII. public opinion. The soldiers appear to have been well satisfied
 1809. with the Duke; they indeed had seen the incessant exertions
 February. which he had made for supporting them when the government
 could send them no supplies: but the officers were divided into
 cabals, and there was a strong party against him. His offended
 pride did not however abate his desire of continuing to serve his
 country in the field, and he requested permission to remain with
 the army as Colonel of the Royal Spanish Guards; but he was
 informed that this was incompatible with his elevated rank, and
 therefore he was called to Seville. No inquiry concerning the
 rout at Ucles was instituted; the opinion prevailed that it was
 imputable to his error in exposing the advanced guard at such a
 distance from the body of his army; but the faults with which
 he charged Venegas were overlooked, and the government con-
 tinued to place a confidence in that General, to which, in any
 other capacity than that of a commander, his honourable cha-
 racter and personal qualities entitled him.

Feb. 12.

*Calumnies
 against
 Castaños.*

The French, at the commencement of their revolutionary
 war, sent every unsuccessful general to the scaffold, the Con-
 vention in its bloody acts keeping pace with the bloodiest desires
 of a deceived and infuriated populace. The Central Junta con-
 tracted no such guilt, though humanity is not the characteristic
 of the Spaniards, and justice in state affairs had in that country
 for centuries been unknown. They gave no ear to vulgar or
 malignant accusations; but, on the other hand, they allowed their
 generals no opportunity of vindicating themselves. Upon this
 ground Castaños, as well as Infantado, had cause to complain.
 The order which called him from the command of the central
 army during its retreat intimated no dissatisfaction at his con-
 duct; on the contrary, it summoned him to take the presidency
 of the Military Junta, saying that the fate of armies depended

upon the plans which were laid down for them. That restless intriguer, the Conde de Montijo, who had visited him at his head-quarters at Tudela, professed the warmest friendship towards him, and spoken of him in the language of unbounded admiration, left the army suddenly two days before the battle, and wherever he went reported that Castaños was a traitor, and had sold the country to the French. This nearly proved fatal to the General, when, in obedience to his summons, he set out to join the Central Junta, taking with him merely such an escort as his rank required: for he soon found that fifteen horse and thirty foot were not sufficient to protect him from imminent danger; the clamour which Montijo raised had spread far and wide, and they could not enter a village without preparations as serious as if they were about to engage in action. At Miguel-turra, in La Mancha, the Junta exerted themselves ineffectually to restrain the populace, who were crying out, Kill him! kill him! The members of that body, the better to secure him, gathered round his person, and accompanied him on foot; the rabble pressed upon them with blind fury, and their lives, as well as that of Castaños, would have been sacrificed, if his cavalry had not charged the multitude sword in hand, and opened the way. But the danger was not over when he had been housed; the house was beset, and it was only by the exertions of the better classes, and especially of a priest, that he was enabled to leave the place before daybreak the following morning. It became necessary for them to avoid all populous places, and take up their lodging in the smallest and most retired hamlets; and yet with these precautions his life was frequently threatened. In addition to this evil there was the uncertainty of knowing whither to direct his course: three times on his journey he found that the Central Junta had changed their place of residence; and when he finally made for Seville, it was with a belief that

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CHAP. XVII. they had removed to Puerto de Santa Maria. Upon approaching
 1809. Seville, he was ordered to take up his abode in the monastery of S. Geronimo de Buenavista, and there await the farther determination of the government. Montijo had accused him as an instrument of Tilly, engaged with him in treasonable designs, and also in a scheme for rendering Andalusia independent, and making it the head of a confederacy of provinces. This was the mere fabrication of a man who scrupled at no means for promoting his own insane ambition, and as such the Junta received it; but they deemed it expedient to treat the General as if he were under their displeasure, lest a suspicion, which in its consequences might be most fatal to the country, should be raised against themselves.

Castaños, Representacion, 15—18

His memorial to the Junta.

See vol. i. 613.

Castaños was not aware of the accusation which had been thus preferred; least indeed of all men could he have supposed that a charge of federalism would have been brought against him, who had with so much decision and effect opposed the dangerous disposition of the provincial authorities to consult their own security alone. But he complained of the injurious restraint in which he was placed, and in an able and temperate memorial appealed to his past services, showed that the defeat at Tudela was not imputable to any error or indiscretion on his part (his opinion having been over-ruled by their representative, D. Francisco Palafox), and required that his conduct might be judged of by the circumstances in which he was placed, and the actual condition of his army, not as if he had commanded 80,000 effective men. An army in the field, he said, was like a musical instrument with many keys and many registers: if these did not answer to the touch, if many strings were wanting, and the others not in tune, the best musician would be deemed a sorry performer by those who heard the broken and jarring sounds which he produced, and knew not the state of the instru-

ment. Still, he maintained, the French were far from being able to subdue Spain. Castaños was not unsupported while he thus defended himself with the confidence of an innocent and injured man. The Junta of Seville honourably espoused his cause, and the government allowed him to remove to his own house at Algeciras, there to remain while the inquiry into his conduct which he demanded should be carried on.

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Montijo was one of those men who in disordered times are intoxicated with ambition and vanity. His object in seeking the ruin of Castaños was to obtain a command for himself. He represented to the Junta that the resources by which the miracle of restoring the country might be effected could only be drawn from Andalusia ; but that to call them forth activity, energy, patriotism, and above all the confidence of the public were required. Under any other circumstances he should have blushed to designate himself as the person in whom these qualifications were united, and unhappily the only person who possessed the last ; but in such an emergency a good Spaniard must sacrifice even his modesty. Spain might still be saved if he were commissioned to take what cavalry he could raise, put himself at the head of the forces in La Mancha, and march upon Madrid ; and he pledged his sacred word of honour that he would resign the command as soon as the French should be driven back to the Ebro. This proposal met with as little attention as it deserved ; and Montijo then joined the army of Carolina, there to sow fresh intrigues, and meet with deserved humiliation.

*Intrigues of
Montijo.*

The French themselves were at this time in such a situation, that the desultory and harassing warfare which the Junta of Seville advised at the commencement of the struggle might now have been pursued against them with great effect. A disposition in some of the marshals to disregard Joseph, and act without any deference to his wishes or commands, had shown itself

*Progress of
the French
in Castille
and Leon.*

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before Buonaparte left Spain; the attention of the French cabinet was directed toward Austria, and the affairs of Spain were left to the intrusive government, which had in fact no control over the armies by whom alone it was to be supported. But as there was no enemy in the field alert and able enough to take advantage of the fair occasions which offered, the French commanders believed the struggle was at an end, and that they had only to march over the country and receive the submission of the inhabitants. While Victor occupied Toledo, waiting only a convenient season to disperse the hasty levies which were brought together for the defence of Andalusia, General Dorneau marched against Zamora, scaled the walls of that ancient city, and put to death those inhabitants who, in the flagitious language of the French bulletin, were called the most guilty. Castille and Leon were overrun, and wherever they went those scenes of profanation, violence, and murder were exhibited, in which Buonaparte's soldiers were systematically allowed to glut the worst passions of corrupted and brutalized humanity.

*New levies
raised by the
Spaniards.*

Yet while the country was thus at the mercy of the French, the panic which their appearance every where excited extended nowhere beyond their immediate presence. In all places which were not actually occupied by the enemy, the local authorities acted as if no enemy had been at hand, and their own government had been as efficient as it was legitimate. The enlisting went on, and promises of speedy triumph and sure deliverance were held forth with a confidence which no reverses could shake. The fugitives from the different armies no sooner reached their own homes than they were again enrolled to be embodied, and exposed again to privations and sufferings such as those from which they had so hardly escaped. Before their strength was recruited, they were sent off to form new armies, neither better disciplined, better commanded, nor better provided than those

which had been routed and dispersed. They went hungered, half-naked, and cursing their fortune, without confidence in their officers, each other, or themselves, yet believing fully that the deliverance of Spain would be effected with a faith which seemed to require and perhaps very generally expected, miracles for its fulfilment. Human means indeed seem to have been provided as little as if they had not been taken into the account.

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This unreasoning confidence brought with it evil as well as good. Many of those who had something to lose, and hoped that part at least might be saved by submission, took either side according as the scale inclined. When the enemy was absent, they joined the national voice, which expressed what were their real feelings: if the French appeared, they were ready to take the oaths, and act under them, as far as was necessary for their own safety or advantage, longing at the same time and looking for the day of deliverance and vengeance. In many places, the magistracy acted with no other view than that of averting from themselves and their immediate jurisdiction as much of the common misery as they could. This was particularly the case in those parts of Leon and Castille which lay most open to the enemy. The enrolment was rigorously enforced there, and men were hurried off: but any means of local defence were rather dreaded than desired. Offers of assistance were made from Ciudad Rodrigo to Ledesma and Salamanca, and both cities declined the proffered aid, as unnecessary; but in truth, because they believed it to be unavailing, and had determined not to provoke the enemy by resistance.

*Temporizing conduct
of certain
magistrates.*

Ciudad Rodrigo had at that time become a point of great interest, owing to a well-timed movement of Sir Robert Wilson's with a small body of Portuguese volunteers. This adventurous officer had been rewarded by the Emperor of Germany with the order of Maria Theresa, for a brilliant affair in which the 15th

*Sir Robert
Wilson.*

CHAP. regiment of dragoons was engaged during the siege of Landrecy.
 XVII. He served afterwards in Egypt, and published a history of the
 1809. British expedition to that country, in which work he charged
 January. Buonaparte with the massacre of his prisoners at Jaffa, and the
 empoisonment of his own sick and wounded. The facts were
 boldly denied at the time, and willingly disbelieved by Buona-
 parte's admirers; they have since been substantiated by ample
 evidence, and by his own avowal; but the merit of having first
 proclaimed them was Sir Robert Wilson's, and it marked him
 for an object of especial vengeance should he ever fall into the
 hands of the tyrant, whose true character he had been the first
 to expose. This rendered him more conspicuous than he would
 have been for his rank, which was that of Lieutenant-Colonel.
 Having, in pursuance of the convention, superintended the em-
 barkation of the French at Porto, and by great exertions con-
 tributed to save them from the just fury of the populace, he
 applied himself with characteristic activity and enterprise to
 raising and disciplining a Portuguese legion in that city. The
 plan was entirely approved by Sir Hew Dalrymple, and zealously
 forwarded by the Bishop. Two thousand men presently pre-
 sented themselves, and that number might have been increased
 five-fold could he have relied upon resources for them; for the
 alertness with which they learned our discipline, the confidence
 which they acquired, the pride which they felt at being dis-
 played, and which their officers partook in displaying them, ex-
 cited the emulation of their countrymen. Some jealousy was
 felt at Lisbon, and some obstacles were thrown in his way, upon
 the pretext that an invidious distinction would be occasioned
 between these and the other Portuguese troops. Sir John Cradock,
 however, when the command in that capital devolved upon him,
 authorised Sir Robert to act according to his own judgement.
 His first thought had been to embark for Carthagená, and march

*He raises a
 Portuguese
 legion at
 Porto.*

from thence to Catalonia. Afterwards, Asturias seemed a nearer and more important point. But after Blake's army had been dispersed, and before Sir John Moore and Sir David Baird had formed a junction, he resolved to march toward the frontiers, thinking that he might move from Miranda or Braganza, and so to facilitate the communication between them, and cover, as far as his means permitted, the approach to the northern provinces. With this intent he marched the first division of his legion, consisting of 700 men with six pieces of cannon; they were to be followed by the second, under Baron Eben, an Hanoverian officer in the British service; and this by the third. And Sir J. Cradock had ordered a battalion of Portuguese infantry and a regiment of cavalry to join him.

When Sir Robert reached Lamego, he there found information, that a small British detachment which had been stationed in Ciudad Rodrigo, had, in consequence of the approaching danger, forsaken it. Always hopeful himself, and well aware of what importance it was that that position should be maintained, he left his troops, and hastened thither to consult with the Junta. It was a point from which he could act upon that division of the enemy who were then forcing their way into Extremadura, . . . or, co-operate with any Spanish force that might take the field from Salamanca. The people, on their part, declared their determination to defend the place resolutely; his aid, therefore, was accepted as frankly as it was offered, and the legion accordingly advanced from Lamego through a country almost impracticable at that season. By dint of human exertion, carts and artillery were drawn up steeps which hitherto had been deemed inaccessible for carriages. Sometimes men and officers, breast-deep in the water, dragged the guns through torrents so formidable, that cattle could not be trusted to perform that service. Sometimes, where the carriages would have floated and

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*Sir Robert
goes to Ciu-
dad Ro-
drigo.*

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have been swept away, the wheels were taken off, and they were slidden over on the foot-bridges. Sometimes they were hauled along causeways and connecting bridges so narrow, that the wheels rested on half their fellies upon the stones which were set edge upwards on the verge of the road. It was the first march these troops had ever made, but notwithstanding the severity of such labour, performed at such a season, and during incessant rain, not a man deserted, and there was no straggling, no murmuring amid all their difficulties: they sung as they went along, and reached their resting-place at night with unabated cheerfulness.

*He refuses
to return to
Porto.*

Sir Robert had plainly stated to the Junta that his legion was not to form part of the garrison, but that in every operation without the walls he should think it his duty to aid, and even in defence of the suburbs before the Salamanca gate, as long as his return over the bridge was assured. The Junta and the people of that city displayed a hearty willingness to co-operate with their allies in any manner that might appear most conducive to the common cause; and from that generous spirit they never departed during all the vicissitudes of the war. At first there was a fair prospect of acting offensively; but when the authorities at Ledesma and Salamanca declined the assistance which was offered them from this quarter, Sir Robert, instead of maintaining the line of the Tormes, as he had hoped to do, formed on the Agueda, having his head-quarters at San Felices. When he had marched from the coast, it was with the hope of facilitating the plans and contributing to the success of a British army perfectly equipped and disciplined, strong in itself, and confident in its commanders and its cause. He now learnt that that army was retreating with a speed which the most utter defeat could hardly have precipitated: at the same time he was privately advised to fall back on Porto. But though weak himself,

he had already ascertained that the French in that part of Spain were not strong, that the activity and appearance of his little corps had imposed upon them a salutary opinion of his strength, and that his continuance there was of no trifling importance, not merely as covering the removal of the British stores from Almeida, but as checking the enemy's advance in that direction, counteracting the report which they busily spread and indeed believed themselves, that the English had entirely abandoned Spain, encouraging the Spaniards, and gaining time for them to strengthen the works of Ciudad Rodrigo, and for training a brave and well-disposed people.

This became of more consequence when the Junta of that city had, in their own language, "the melancholy honour of being the only one which held out in all Castille," Ledesma and Salamanca having, without a show of resistance, admitted the enemy. For him to obtain intelligence was as easy, owing to the disposition of the people, as it was difficult for the French. Having ascertained that they had few cavalry and only 1500 foot in Salamanca, that they were proportionally weak in the country about Zamora and Villalpando, and that they had not occupied Ledesma for want of men, he entered Ledesma, carried off, in Ferdinand's name for the Junta of Rodrigo, the treasure and money which had been raised there for the French in obedience to requisition, and compelled them to seek and convoy what provisions they extorted from the country. They had given public notice that every person who disobeyed their requisitions should be punished with death. Sir Robert sent forth a counter-proclamation, declaring, that if this threat were effected, he would hang a Frenchman for every Spaniard. By incessant activity, attacking their posts in open day, he kept them perpetually on the alarm, and made them apprehend a serious attack on Salamanca itself. Upon that score their ap-

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XVII.
1809.
January.
*Effect of his
movements.*

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*January.**Part of the
legion de-
tained at
Porto.**Displeasure
of the au-
thorities
there.**Rank given
him by the
Spanish go-
vernment.*

prehensions would have been realized, if the whole force which Sir Robert had raised had been then at his command ; or if even with such poor means as he possessed he had not been withheld by orders from Lisbon. But the remaining corps of his legion had been detained at Porto, and when he had applied for them, and for clothing and military stores, he had been answered that the men were wanted for the defence of Porto itself, and that, even if stores might have been spared, they could not be sent without imminent danger from the people. It was in vain for him to represent that the measures which he had taken were those which were best adapted for the protection of Portugal, by covering her weakest side ; that Portugal must be defended beyond her frontiers ; that the service in which he was engaged was of all others that in which the troops might soonest acquire the discipline and experience in which the Portuguese soldiers were so notoriously deficient ; that he wanted the men only ; not provisions, those he could assure to them ; not money, for if what had been received from England for the express use of the legion were withheld from it, he would apply elsewhere. Reasoning was of no avail when the danger from the side of Galicia appeared to be so near as in reality it was ; and the Bishop of Porto, though he had warmly encouraged the formation of the legion, as an important measure towards restoring the military character of his countrymen, and though Sir Robert had succeeded in gaining his good opinion to a high degree, was nevertheless offended at the disrespect which seemed to be shown to him and the other Portuguese authorities, by the manner in which that officer was now acting as if wholly independent of them. From the Spanish government, however, Sir Robert received as much encouragement as he could have desired in his most sanguine hopes. They gave him the rank of Brigade-General, and placed the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo and the troops in the

province at his disposal. And this proof of confidence was given at a time when a misunderstanding had arisen between the two cabinets, which might have been fatal to the common cause, if each party had not rendered full justice to the upright intention of the other.

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As soon as the dispersion of Blake's army was known in England, the British government anticipating the disasters which would follow, considered Cadiz as the ultimate point of retreat to which the Spaniards would be driven; there, supported by that fortress on one side, and by Gibraltar on the other, they might make a stand which no force that France could bring against them could overpower. Accordingly, when Sir John Moore's first intention of retreating was communicated, government resolved that his army should immediately be transferred to the south of Spain, for it was impossible to foresee the miserable state to which the manner of his retreat would reduce it. But the representations of that general concerning the little assistance which he received from the Spaniards, and the little patriotism which he could discover, so far influenced ministers, that they thought it improper to hazard an army in the south, unless a corps of it were admitted into Cadiz. The treachery of Morla, and the danger of similar treasons, rendered this precaution advisable. Upon this subject Mr. Frere was instructed to communicate with the Junta, and as it was not apprehended that the required proof of confidence would be refused, General Sherbrooke, with 4000 men, was ordered to sail immediately for Cadiz. He was not to require the command of the garrison, . . . that might have offended the feelings of the Spaniards. If, however, the Junta should not admit him, he was then to proceed to Gibraltar, and any operations in the south were necessarily to be abandoned, though there was no intention even in that case of abandoning the cause of Spain. Sir John

*Proposal
that Bri-
tish troops
should be
admitted
into Cadiz.*

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*Objections
of the Spa-
nish govern-
ment.*

Cradock also was instructed to sail for Cadiz, if he should find it necessary to abandon Portugal; but he was not to take this step till he had been apprized of the determination of the Spanish government.

Before it was known that the Junta had quitted Aranjuez, Sir George Smith had been sent to Cadiz on a local mission, to provide for the possible case of British troops being necessary for the defence of that city, at a time when it might be impracticable to obtain the opinion of the central government. When the government was removed to Seville, his mission ceased with the necessity of it. He, however, not only considered it as still existing, but went beyond his instructions; informed the governor of Cadiz that he had authority to require that British troops should be admitted to garrison that place; and sent to Sir John Cradock, directing him to dispatch troops thither from Lisbon, . . . a measure which was not to have been taken except at the direct solicitation of the Spanish authorities at Cadiz. And this he did without waiting for their consent, and without consulting or even communicating with the English ambassador. The Junta immediately conceived that some secret designs were on foot, with which Mr. Frere had not been entrusted, because he had not been thought a proper instrument; and that minister had the vexation of hearing the justice which they did to his frankness urged as a ground for unjust suspicions. “Cadiz,” they said, “was not threatened, and a measure so extraordinary as that of admitting English troops there might compromise the Supreme Junta with the nation. Many would imagine that the prognostics of Morla, which the government had considered as dreams, had assumed at least an air of reality; and however the Junta might be persuaded of the purity of the motives by which Great Britain was influenced, it would not be in their power to counteract this imagination.

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Spain had addressed herself to Great Britain, and had obtained succours and good offices, which would for ever redound to the honour of England. Spain had opened her heart to unbounded gratitude; but never could believe that her misfortunes obliged her to this. Let the allied troops disembark in small divisions, so as to leave room for each other, proceed without delay to occupy cantonments at Xeres, Port St. Mary's, and the neighbourhood, and then pursue their march into the interior. It would be easy to fall back upon Cadiz if that should be necessary; but that necessity was at all events very distant." This, as the final resolution of King Ferdinand, the Junta (governing in his name) communicated to Mr. Frere: "trusting," they said, "in his discernment and in his religious probity, that he would feel the truth of their representations, and give the most peremptory orders for the British troops to abide by what had been agreed upon, and under no pretext whatever to remain in the fortress of Cadiz."

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During these discussions, the two regiments under General Mackenzie, which Sir George Smith had so precipitately ordered from Lisbon, arrived in the bay. About the same time Mr. Frere received a copy of the instructions intended for Sir John Moore, directing him, in case he could not keep his ground in the north, to embark his troops, and carry them round either to Lisbon or to the south of Spain. These the ambassador communicated to the Junta; and at the same time informed them that the British government expected Buonaparte would have driven back the English army into Galicia, and marched himself into Andalusia to make himself master of Seville, and shut the door against every hope of succour. Expecting that he would pursue this plan, government, while it sent these instructions to Sir John Moore, dispatched the corps under General Sherbrooke, with a view of preventing at least the sur-

Troops arrive in the bay.

CHAP. XVII. render of Cadiz, and ensuring to the auxiliary army some safe landing-place. In such a scheme, Mr. Frere argued, there was nothing unreasonable; it did not become the British ministers to risk their army without any place of retreat from an enemy who was less formidable for his military force than for the means of corruption which he employed, . . . means which the capitulation of Madrid evinced to have been not less successful in Spain than in other countries. Should the English then expose themselves to the danger arising from the enemy's intrigues, only in deference to the injurious suspicions which that very enemy wished to excite against them in the minds of the Spanish government, . . . a government to which that of his Britannic Majesty had never ceased to offer proofs of disinterestedness and of good faith? "The members of the Junta," said Mr. Frere, "will do me the justice to admit that I have never endeavoured to promote the interests of my nation, but as being essentially connected with those of their own. If, however, I have always been guided by the same sentiments and the same views which a Spanish politician might have, I do not think it is to depart from them, if I deliver the same opinion which I should give had I the honour of occupying a place in the council of your nation; namely, that the whole policy of the Spanish government rests essentially on a persuasion of perfect good faith on the part of England, and that it is important to confirm it more and more by testimonies of mutual confidence, and by avoiding the slightest appearance of distrust between government and government."

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*Mr. Frere's
representations
to the
Central
Junta.*

One other point Mr. Frere adverted to, which, though less important, was of great weight. The precariousness of commerce, occasioned by the supposed insecurity of Cadiz, was prejudicial to the finances of Spain. There was no longer a place in the peninsula where British goods could be deposited; and

the government was therefore under the necessity of cutting off all mercantile intercourse between the colonies and the rest of the civilized world, or of affording to foreign commerce a security which it could not find in the sole protection of a Spanish garrison. On this head he appealed to the custom-house registers, and to the applications made by neutrals for permission to reship goods, which they did not deem any longer safe. A note was transmitted in reply to this, saying, that the Junta would dispatch an extraordinary courier to London, and empower their minister there to settle a point of so much importance in a manner agreeable to the interests of both nations. Meantime, the English troops which were at present in the bay, and those which should arrive there, might disembark, for the purpose of proceeding to Port St. Mary, San Lucar, Xeres, and the other places proposed for their cantonment. No misfortune which could happen to the Spanish cause could prevent the English from falling back on Gibraltar and Cadiz; and this step would prevent the inconvenience and perhaps sickness to which they might be exposed by remaining on board ship or in Cadiz, the appointed stations being in a country the most healthy in the world.

Having thus considered the convenience of the troops, the Junta submitted two propositions to Mr. Frere, the only person, they said, alluding to Sir George Smith's interference, whom they acknowledged as the representative of the British nation. First, that the British troops should proceed to Catalonia, and garrison the maritime ports of that principality, thus enabling the Spanish army in that quarter to march to the relief of Zaragoza. Secondly, that they should co-operate with Cuesta: that general was threatened by a force not very superior in number to his own, and the assistance of the English might give him the superiority; thus Cadiz would be secured, and time given to set on

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Spanish go-
vernment.**Feb. 17.**Their pro-
posal for
employing
the troops.*

CHAP. XVII. 1809. February. foot the troops who were now only waiting for muskets from England. The note concluded by expressing a feeling of honourable pain in the Junta, that England should distrust the safety of Cadiz unless it were garrisoned by English troops. They asserted, that the constancy and valour of the Spanish nation, manifested in this arduous struggle, entitled it to the respect of Europe; and, gently hinting at what had passed in Galicia, they requested that a veil might be drawn over it. Cadiz was not situated like Coruña, the same events therefore could not possibly occur there.

*Conference
with Mr.
Frere.
Feb. 18.*

Upon the receipt of this note, Mr. Frere requested a conference. They proposed to him that he should name a governor for Cadiz. He replied, it was a responsibility with which he would not charge himself for all the world. Four months ago he should have chosen Morla, Espeleta six months before that: both had been found wanting in the day of trial, though neither had been placed in a situation so trying as that of a governor holding out in the last remaining garrison. Then replying to the argument, that the Junta could not act against popular opinion, "it must likewise be recollected," he said, "that the British government could not proceed in opposition to an opinion equally decided in England; and which of the two pretensions was the more just? England was willing to expose an English army to any hazard which resulted absolutely from the nature of things; but England would not consent that that danger should be aggravated in the slightest degree, out of deference to the caprice of popular opinion, or suspicions which were unworthy of either country. England required of Spain that it should place confidence in the British government, binding itself by the most formal engagements; Spain offered the choice of a governor and the chance of his fidelity. Our proposal was in every respect the fairest and the most rational, and

it could not be expected that we should depart from a demand of right, for the sake of conferring a favour. Mr. Frere offered to propose to General Mackenzie, that he should leave 1000 men in Cadiz, and proceed with the rest to act in concert with Cuesta for the protection of Seville, and that when General Sherbrooke arrived, 3000 should proceed to the same direction, and he should content himself with garrisoning Cadiz with 2000 men, and proceed with or forward the remainder of his own force to General Mackenzie. To this proposition the Junta had so nearly acceded, that the agreement was only broken off by their insisting that the public mind could not be reconciled to the admission of 2000 troops into Cadiz, and offering to admit half the number, a force which Mr. Frere judged altogether inadequate to a purpose for which his own government allotted four times that amount.

The conference, which was conducted on both sides with perfect moderation and temper, concluded with a fair avowal from the Junta, that they were convinced of the good faith of the British government, and of the advantage that would result to Spain from the admission of British troops into Cadiz, if that were to be the indispensable condition of their co-operation; but that their own existence as a government depended upon popular opinion; and the English ambassador could not be ignorant what numerous and active enemies were endeavouring to undermine them. The Junta of Seville, who gave themselves great credit for resisting the introduction of the English into Cadiz last year when the French were advanced as far as Ecija, were upon the watch now, and calling the attention of the people to the conduct of the Central Junta in the present instance. Mr. Frere made answer, that he could not of course expect his opinion should be submitted to upon a subject on which their existence as a government and their personal security (for such in

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*Mr. Frere
requests
Cuesta's
opinion.*

fact was the case) were involved. But he advised them to consider whether the responsibility to which they exposed themselves in the other alternative was not equally dangerous, and whether their enemies would not be as ready and as able to make a handle of the rejection of British assistance as of its acceptance.

Mr. Frere was aware that the uppermost feeling in the minds of some of the Junta was an apprehension of the resentment which Cuesta might entertain against them, convinced as that general must have been of their weakness by the manner of his appointment. Being desirous, therefore, of obtaining his opinion in favour of the measure which the British government proposed, or at least in such terms as would remove all fear of his declaring himself in opposition to it, he wrote to him, explaining what Great Britain was willing to do in aid of Spain, and what condition was required. That condition, he said, was to be considered as indispensable, not only in the opinion of government, but in that of the nation, the individuals of which did not at that moment consider Cadiz as sufficiently secure even for a place of disposal for their merchandize, so that they were daily soliciting permission to re-export it; and it might easily be judged whether the nation would risk its army upon an assurance which individuals did not consider sufficient for their woollen and cotton. Lisbon had twice been garrisoned by British troops, without the smallest inconvenience to the Portuguese government. Madeira had in like manner been garrisoned: the Portuguese knew us by long experience; they knew also the internal state of England; knew that the English government never entertained a thought of abusing the confidence of its allies; and the state of public opinion was such in England, that it could not do this, even though it wished it. Under the present circumstances, the political question came before General Cuesta, both as a commander and

a patriot, who, as he must be interested in any thing that might appear to injure the honour and independence of his country, so also he could not regard with indifference any thing that might derange the military plans of his government, and perhaps its political relations, by repeated acts of mistrust and mutual displeasure. 4300 good British troops might at this time march to co-operate with him upon the frontier of Extremadura, they would be followed by 1500 more as soon as General Sherbrooke arrived, and the auxiliary army would be delayed no longer than was necessary to dispose of its wounded and prisoners, and to be re-equipped. The question therefore was, whether General Cuesta could dispense with the present reinforcement, and Spain with the aid of an auxiliary army; for these were the points to be decided by the resolution of admitting or sending back the British troops, such being the alternative in which those troops were placed by the orders under which they left Lisbon.

Cuesta returned a reply in terms of proper respect, both for the British government and his own. He did not, he said, discover any difficulty which should prevent the British troops from garrisoning Cadiz; but he was far from supposing that the Central Junta could be without good ground for their objections, and that they should have objections was sufficient to prevent him from giving any opinion unless they consulted him. With regard to the 4300 men, there could be no doubt but that he stood in need of them; and he hoped that England would lend him much greater assistance, particularly if from any change of circumstances the Central Junta should no longer appear repugnant to the condition which the British government required. This reply did not alter the determination which Mr. Frere had made, of sending the troops back to Lisbon, considering Seville as comparatively safe, and conceiving that the principle which the English ministry had originally laid down, of not attaching

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Cuesta's reply.

CHAP. XVII. 1809. small corps of British troops to a Spanish army, was one he should not be justified in departing from, for any object less important than the security of Cadiz or the capital. He communicated this determination to Don Martin de Garay, alleging that the information which he had lately received from Lisbon rendered such a measure necessary.

Close of the discussion.

Garay's answer closed the discussion. It was meant to be at the same time conciliatory, and capable of being produced for the exculpation of the Junta. He represented, "that if any immediate attack upon Cadiz was to be feared, . . if the Spanish forces were incapable of defending that point, . . if there were no others of the greatest importance where the enemy might be opposed with advantage, the Junta would not fear to hurt the public feeling by admitting foreign troops into that fortress, because public feeling would then be actuated by the existing state of things. But no such emergency existed; the armies were strengthening themselves in points very distant from Cadiz; the enemy had much ground to pass, and many difficulties to conquer, before he could threaten it; time could never be wanted for falling back upon that fortress; it was easy to be defended, . . it was to be considered as a last point of retreat, and extreme points ought to be defended in advance, never in themselves, except in cases of extreme urgency. The army of Extremadura defended Andalusia on that side, those of the centre and La Carolina at the Sierra Morena; the enemy for some time past had not been able to make any progress; and there if superior forces could be collected against him, a decisive blow might be struck. Catalonia too was bravely defending itself, and Zaragoza still resisted the repeated attacks of an obstinate and persevering besieger. Either in Extremadura, or with the central army or in Catalonia, the assistance of Great Britain would be of infinite service. This was the opinion of the Junta; this was the

opinion of the whole nation, and would doubtless be that of every one who contemplated the true state of things. If the auxiliary troops already in the bay, or on their passage, should disembark in the neighbourhood of Cadiz, and proceed to reinforce General Cuesta, they would always find a safe retreat in Cadiz in case of any reverse; but should a body of troops, already very small, leave part of its force in Cadiz, in order to secure a retreat at such a distance, the English ambassador himself must acknowledge that such assistance could inspire the Spaniards with very little confidence, particularly after the events in Galicia. But it appeared to Mr. Frere that the presence of these troops was necessary at Lisbon, and therefore he had given orders for their return. Of this measure the same might be said as of the proposed one for securing Cadiz. Lisbon was not the point where Portugal could be defended; the greatest possible number of troops ought to be employed in those advanced lines where the enemy was posted, and where he might be routed decisively. For all these reasons the Supreme Junta were persuaded, that if the British government should determine that its troops should not act in union with theirs, except on the expressed condition, this non-co-operation could never be imputed to them. The Junta must act in such a manner, that if it should be necessary to manifest to the nation, and to all Europe, the motives of their conduct, it might be done with that security, and with that foundation, that should conciliate to them the public opinion, which was the first and main spring of their power."

Thus terminated the discussion concerning the admission of English troops into Cadiz. Mr. Frere warned the Junta of the ill consequences which must result to Spain, if it should appear that the efforts and offers which the King of England had made should have the effect of producing embarrassment to his government at home. It appears, indeed, as if both governments

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CHAP. acted more with reference to their enemies at home, than from
XVII. any real importance which they could attach to the point in dis-
1809. pute. With the Spanish government this was confessedly the
case; they did not, and could not, possibly suspect the good
faith of England: . . . between Spain and England, the honourable
character of one country was sufficient security for the other;
but they stood equally in fear of a set of men who criticised all
their measures with factious acrimony, because their own en-
thusiastic hopes of complete triumph and thorough reformation
had not been fulfilled; and of Morla and the other traitors,
whose aim was to excite suspicion of Great Britain. Under the
influence of this feeling, they opposed a measure which they did
not think otherwise objectionable, but which they opposed the
more firmly because they did not perceive that it was necessary.
The English ministry on their part wanted a point of defence
against the opposition, who, as they omitted no means of wound-
ing the pride and calumniating the character of the Spaniards,
were continually saying that they did not desire our assistance,
and that they had no confidence in us. It was against this
party at home that Cadiz was wanted as a point of defence, . .
not as a point of retreat upon a coast where we possessed Gib-
raltar, and where also we were sure of the disposition of the
people in Cadiz itself, whatever might be the conduct of its
governor. The governor at Coruña had failed in his duty,
but still the embarkation of the English was protected by that
fortress.

Mr. Frere concluded this unpleasant transaction according
to his own judgement. He had the satisfaction of finding that
the ministry perfectly accorded with him. They sent him Sir
George Smith's instructions, authorising him, if he thought pro-
per, to communicate them to the Supreme Junta. They recalled
Sir George, and assured the Junta that no such separate or secret

commission, as they apprehended to have been given to him, ever had been, or ever would be, entrusted to any officer or other person; and that it never could be in the contemplation of the English government to select any other channel of communication than the King's accredited minister, in a transaction of such importance, much less to engage in such a transaction without the entire consent and concurrence of the Spanish government. They dispatched orders after General Sherbrooke, directing him to proceed to Lisbon instead of Cadiz. Nevertheless, if at any time the Junta should require a British force for the actual garrison of Cadiz, Mr. Frere was authorized to send to Lisbon for that purpose, and the commanding officer there was ordered to comply with his requisition.

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*Papers relating to
Spain and
Portugal,
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While this question was discussed at Seville, Cadiz itself became the scene of an insurrection, in which the popular feeling in favour of the English was unequivocally expressed. The people of that city were dissatisfied with the Central Junta; they complained that, instead of informing them of the true state of affairs, their government kept them in ignorance; and having been deceived by Morla, the slightest circumstance sufficed to make them suspect any one who had the means of betraying them. A corps of foreigners had been raised from the prisoners taken at Baylen; they consisted chiefly of Poles and Germans, who might have fought with a better will against Buonaparte than for him, but who were less to be relied on than deserters, because they had enlisted to escape confinement. This corps was ordered to do garrison duty at Cadiz; while the volunteers of that city and of Port St. Mary's were drafted to other parts. But the people, thinking that if Cadiz wanted defenders, it could by none be so faithfully defended as by its own children, determined to oppose both measures, and on the morning of the 22d of February they broke out in insurrection. Their first act of

*Insurrection
at Cadiz.*

CHAP. violence was to seize a courier charged with dispatches from the
XVII. Junta to the Marquis of Villed, a member of that body, and its
1809. representative in this important fortress. The Marquis had rendered himself suspected by setting persons at liberty who were confined for their supposed attachment to the French, and by imposing restrictions upon the public amusements. A report that he had committed women of respectable rank to the house of industry, and threatened others with the same scandalous punishment, excited indignation in the rabble; they seized and were dragging him to the public jail, where, if he had arrived alive, it is little probable that he could long have been protected from popular fury. But P. Moguer, a capuchin friar, persuaded them to commit him to the capuchin convent, and pledged himself to produce his person, that he might suffer condign punishment, if his treason should be proved.

Luckily the confidence of the people was possessed by the governor, Don Felix Jones, and in a still greater degree by the guardian of the Capuchins, Fr. Mariano de Sevilla. The former represented to General Mackenzie, that it would tend to re-establish tranquillity if an assurance were given that the English would take no part in the tumult; for they had been called upon to land and assist against the traitors. Accordingly the British General sent some officers who could speak the Spanish language, and they, in the presence of the governor and the principal capuchin friars, distinctly declared, that the British troops would by no means interfere in any thing relating to the internal concerns of the people, but that they were ready to assist in defending the town to the last extremity. This seemed for a time to allay their agitation. In the course of a few hours they again became tumultuous; still an opinion prevailed that they were betrayed, and that measures were arranged for delivering up Cadiz to the French. They called for the dismissal of those whom they sus-

pected, and they required that two British officers should be appointed to inspect the fortifications, jointly with two Spanish officers, and to direct the preparations for defence. General Mackenzie deputed two officers for that purpose; and all those of his staff accompanied the most active and popular of the friars to a balcony, from whence these orators harangued the people, assuring them of the co-operation of the British troops and the support of the British nation, and frequently appealing to the British officers to confirm by their own voices the pledges given in their name and in their presence. This satisfied the populace, and they dispersed with loud huzzas, in honour of King George and King Ferdinand.

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*Confidence
of the people
in the En-
glish.*

On the following morning the governor issued a proclamation, in which, considering the discontent which had been manifested, “and keeping in mind,” he said, “the loyalty of the inhabitants at all times, but particularly under the present circumstances, and the good and signal services which they had done, and daily were doing, he dismissed from office four persons whose discharge had been loudly demanded; and declared also, that if the people wished to have the Junta of Cadiz suppressed, their desire should be fulfilled. He assured them that no foreign troops should be admitted; but that officers of their faithful ally the British nation were invited to examine the posts and works of the city and its dependencies, and that every thing necessary for its defence should be concerted with them. He promised that the papers of the Marquis should be examined without delay; that there should be no longer any cause of complaint respecting the ignorance in which the people were kept of public affairs, for that whatever occurred should punctually and faithfully be made public; that the enlistment of the inhabitants for the provincial regiment of Ciudad Rodrigo should cease till further consideration; and that no part of the volunteers, the

*Proclama-
tion of the
governor.*

CHAP. light troops, and companies of artillery should be ordered
XVII. away." Notwithstanding the popularity of Don Felix Jones, it
1809. was thought advisable that this proclamation should be counter-
signed by the guardian of the Capuchins.

*Murder of
D. J. de He-
redia.*

Still the tumult continued. Caraffa, who had been second in command of the Spanish troops in Portugal, was confined in the Castle of Catalina, under a charge of misconduct or treachery, with the viceroy of Mexico and other prisoners, who had been sent home from New Spain. The mob proceeded thither, and demanded the prisoners, that they might put them to death. Colonel Roche, who had just arrived from Seville with another English officer, interposed, addressed the people, and succeeded in dissuading them from their purpose. But shortly afterwards they fell in with Don Joseph de Heredia, a particular object of their suspicion, who that very day had at their demand been dismissed from his office of collector of the public rents. He was stepping into a boat to make his escape to Port St. Mary's: the attempt cost him his life, and he was murdered upon the spot. The popular fury seemed now to have spent itself, and the clergy and friars, who throughout the whole insurrection had exerted themselves to pacify the people, and protect the threatened victims, succeeded in restoring peace. To have attempted to quell the mob by force would have occasioned great bloodshed, for they had got possession of arms and of the park of artillery.

*The tumult
subsides.*

*Proclama-
tion of the
Central
Junta.*

Fifty of the rabble, who had been most conspicuous for violence, were seized by the volunteers of Cadiz, and imprisoned. The Central Junta addressed a proclamation to the people of that city, reprehending them with dignified severity for their conduct. "It was absurd," they said, "to apprehend danger in so populous and so brave a city from a single battalion of foreigners, even if there could be any reason to doubt the fidelity

of Poles and Germans, who had been forcibly dragged into Spain, and were in every quarter deserting from the flag under which they had been compelled to march. As little reason was there for their suspicion of the Marquis. His papers were now before the Junta, and nothing was expressed in them but zeal for the country, and diligence to promote all means for the security of Cadiz. Let the state of those means before his arrival be compared with the works projected and executed since. And had the people no other way of manifesting their disapprobation than by tumult? No one came to the Junta to complain of the Marquis's conduct; no one informed them that their commissioner at Cadiz had lost the confidence of the people. Some anonymous letters only had reached the government, some on one side, some on the other, but all contemptible in the eye of equity. But what was the course which would have become the open and generous character of the Spaniards? To have made their complaint frankly and nobly, and the government would have done them justice."

The Junta then warned them to beware of the insidious arts of the enemy. "It is not," said they, "the traitors who fled with the French and returned with them who do most injury to their country; but it is the obscure agitators, hired by them or by the tyrant, who abuse the confidence and mislead the patriotism of the people. It is they who, disseminating distrust and suspicion, lead you through crooked and guilty paths to the precipice, and to subjugation; it is they who convert loyalty into rage, and zeal into sedition. The Junta have proofs enough of these infernal machinations in the intelligence which they receive every day, and in the correspondence which they intercept." But, notwithstanding the government declared its persuasion of Villel's innocence, it was not thought proper completely to exculpate him without such farther inquiry as might

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satisfy the people: this proclamation, therefore, announced that a commission would be appointed to examine his conduct, and that it would not be composed of members of the Central Junta, in order to avoid all shadow of partiality in an affair so serious. "Any person," said the Junta, "shall be heard who desires to accuse him, and the sentence will be adjudged according to law. He himself demands in justice that this may be done; his honour, the estimation of the government, and the public satisfaction, necessarily prescribe it. If the Marquis be culpable, he shall be punished in proportion to his abuse of the high functions and national confidence which he has enjoyed; but if he be declared innocent, it is necessary that the reparation made to his good name be as solemn and public as the aggression was cruel and scandalous." These proceedings satisfied the people, of whom the better sort were grieved at the excesses which had been committed; and their suspicions against the Marquis were in some degree removed when Don Felix Jones, to whom his papers were delivered, declared that no indication of treason was to be discovered in them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SECOND SIEGE OF ZARAGOZA.

THE Central Junta perfectly understood and truly represented 1808.
the spirit of the nation, partaking in some things its blindness and December.
its obstinacy, but also its exalted feeling, its true heroism, and its
incomparable devotion to the cause of national independence.
Its information concerning the real state of affairs was as imper-
fect as its other arrangements. In the correspondence concern-
ing Cadiz, Garay assured the British Ambassador that Zaragoza
was still holding out, not considering that by little less than mi-
racle that glorious city could have held out so long, and not
knowing that the enemy had then been eight days in possession
of its ruins.

Palafox was not present at the battle of Tudela. He had
embarked on the river just before the action began, little appre- *Castaños
accused at
Zaragoza
as a traitor.*
hending that it was so near, and believing that his presence was
required at Zaragoza. This was one cause among the many
which led to the misfortunes of that day; for Castaños, who
would otherwise have been with his own troops, remained with the
Aragonese to supply his place, and each army was thus deprived
of the General who knew the troops, and in whom they trusted. *Representa-
ciones, &c.
del G. Cas-
taños, p.
195.*
During the short time that these Generals had acted together,
there had been no want of confidence and frankness between
them: but after their separation, and the refusal of Castaños
to throw his troops into Zaragoza instead of retreating toward
Madrid, in obedience to the orders of the Central Junta, the

CHAP. XVIII. disasters which had been sustained were imputed by Palafox to his errors. He had been far from apprehending, he said, that he should have to prepare for a second siege; and never could any combination of his own have placed him under such a necessity. The charge of incapacity against Castaños was more broadly made in an official account of the action by General O'Neill, and he was publicly accused of having sold the army and betrayed his country.

*State of
public feel-
ing in that
city.*

Castaños himself did Palafox the justice to believe that he had been deceived by malicious representations. The other charges proceeded from men who sought to shelter their own misconduct by appearing as accusers, or from private malice, which in such times never loses the opportunity of exerting itself with sure effect. Zaragoza was in a state of tremendous agitation; the same spirit was still prevailing there which had so wonderfully repulsed the French, but that spirit had broken the bonds of order; and Palafox, who was so well able to direct the popular feeling in the hour of danger, found it necessary at other times in many things to yield to it. His power was absolute while he held it; but though it had been confirmed to him by the Supreme Junta, it was in fact held only by the tenure of popular opinion, which among large masses of men, and more especially in perilous circumstances, is always influenced less by the considerate and the wise, than by the headstrong, the audacious, and the profligate. Victims whom he dared not interfere to save were sacrificed, and the utmost he could do in behalf of any accused persons, was to secure them in prison, and thus respite them from immediate death. During the former siege the French who resided in the city had been put under arrest; and there had been the twofold anxiety of guarding against any correspondence between them and the besiegers, and protecting them against the fatal effects of popular suspicion, which at any

*Cavallero,
p. 67.*

*Measures of
precaution.*

moment might have produced a massacre of these unfortunate persons. To prevent both the inconvenience and the danger, Palafox sent them away to distant places of confinement; but it was necessary to prepare the people for this by a proclamation, appealing to their honour, and courage, and humanity, and cautioning them against the enemy's emissaries, who were seeking to bring a stain upon their cause by exciting them to acts of murder. The prisoners and deserters were also removed. The nuns were permitted to remove to other convents not within the scene of immediate danger, where they might occupy themselves without interruption in their holy exercises. Aware that in so large a city there must be persons whom their own wealth would have bribed to betray their country, and who would fain have submitted for the sake of preserving their property, Palafox decreed that the inhabitants of Zaragoza, of whatever rank or condition, should consider themselves bound to devote their persons, their property, and their lives to its defence; that the rich should foster, and assist, and clothe the poor, enable them to maintain their respective posts, and remunerate them for the zeal with which they defended their lives, their estates, and their common country. If any man were unnatural enough to disregard this sacred duty, which he owed both to his native land and his religion, he should be fined in proportion to the magnitude of his offence, and the amount of the fine appropriated to the subsistence of the army. All persons who served the cause of the enemy, by pasquinades, by endeavouring to excite a want of confidence in the chiefs, the people, or the army, or by raising disturbances and riots, should be carried before the newly-appointed judge of the police, who would pass judgement according to their crimes, and suitable to the danger of the country; but before he imposed the punishment of death, he should consult the captain-general. Every house was ordered to be well supplied with

CHAP.
XVIII.
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*None of the
inhabitants
leave the
city.*

*Supposed
miracles.*

vessels of water, in order to extinguish fires ; and the officers of the ward were charged to superintend this important measure of preparation. Persons entering or leaving the city were to be watched with care, because the enemy assumed the dress of the Spaniards, and, greatly superior as they were, resorted to every artifice. “ All these measures,” said Palafox, “ should be obeyed with religious respect, because they are all directed to the good of our country, which, in happier times, will recompense all the sacrifices we make, . . . sacrifices so acceptable in the sight of God, and of the Virgin Mother of God, who is our celestial protectress.”

Three days were allowed for all women, all men above three-score, and all boys under fourteen, to leave the city ; a general order being issued, that whithersoever they might go, they should be welcomed, and provided for. But not one of the inhabitants left the place. The sentiment of patriotism was as ardent in the women as in the men ; they thought it a worse evil to seek bread and protection apart from their husbands and fathers than to abide the siege with them, and triumph or perish together : and even if this sentiment had not been so general and so strong, whither were they to betake themselves for security in a land which was every where overrun or threatened by the enemy's armies ? In no place would they have imagined themselves so secure as in Zaragoza itself, which had been so wonderfully defended and delivered, and which they believed to be invincible through the protection of Our Lady of the Pillar, who had chosen it for the seat of her peculiar worship. During the former siege prints of that idol had been distributed by women in the heat of action, and worn by the men in their hats both as a badge and an amulet. The many remarkable escapes and deliverances which had occurred were ascribed not to all-ruling and omnipresent Providence, but to the immediate interference of the

Magna Mater of Zaragoza. Palafox himself had been trained up with more than common care in the superstition of the place; he and his brethren in their childhood had been taken every day to attend mass in the Holy Chapel where the image was enshrined, dressed at such times in the proper costume of the Infantes, as a mark of greater honour to the present Goddess. An appearance in the sky, which at other times might have passed unremembered and perhaps unnoticed, had given strong confirmation to the popular faith. About a month before the commencement of the first siege a white cloud appeared at noon, and gradually assumed the form of a palm tree; the sky being in all other parts clear, except that a few specks of fleecy cloud hovered about the larger one. It was first observed over the church of N. Señora del Portillo, and moving from thence till it seemed to be immediately above that of the Pillar, continued in the same form about half an hour, and then dispersed. The inhabitants were in a state of such excitement, that crowds joined in the acclamation of the first beholder, who cried out, A miracle! and after the defeat of the besiegers had confirmed the omen, a miracle it was universally pronounced to have been, the people proclaiming with exultation that the Virgin had by this token prefigured the victory she had given them, and promised Zaragoza her protection as long as the world should endure.

In many recorded instances superstition such as this has deluded men to their destruction. But the Zaragozans knew that to obtain the divine support, wherein they trusted, they must deserve it by works as well as faith, and that the manner in which heavenly aid would be manifested would be by blessing their human exertions. Palafox himself, confidently as he had expected that the army which he commanded would be successful in the field, had not been negligent in preparing to withstand a second siege. Works of considerable extent and importance had been designed,

CHAP.
XVIII.

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*Memoria de
lo más In-
terezante,
&c. 121.*

Do. 11.

*Works of
defence.*

CHAP. and executed as far as time and means permitted. It was im-
XVIII. possible to convert so large a city into a good fortified place,
1808. accessible as it was on all sides, and every where commanded
within reach of cannon; but with a population so resolute in
defending themselves, every thing became of consequence which
could impede the enemy. The houses within 700 *toises* of the
place were demolished, and their materials employed in the forti-
fications; and the numerous and valuable plantations of olive
trees within the same distance were cut down: there was reason
to regret that this precaution had not been carried farther.
During the autumn the works had not been prosecuted with
vigour, because all men of a certain age were required for mi-
litary service, and those who might have been disposable for
such employment were busied in the vintage, or in gather-
ing hemp. Moreover volunteers did not offer themselves for
this labour, while the danger appeared remote; and when there
were so many demands upon the treasury, the expense of wages
could ill be defrayed. It so happened that no mischief resulted
from this dangerous economy: after the battle of Tudela there
were hands enough at the General's disposal; and the French
allowed time for completing all that had been intended, while
they were collecting means and materials for a siege, the diffi-
culties of which they had been taught how to estimate. The works
were directed by the Commander of the Engineers, Colonel San
Genis; and what was defective in them was imputable not to
any want of science, but to the difficulty of fortifying the whole
circuit of a great city. The Aljafaria, which had been the palace
of the Moorish kings, then of the kings of Aragon, and was now
called the Castle of the Inquisition, because it contained the
prisons of that accursed tribunal, had been converted into a
fortress by Philip V., and was now repaired and strengthened.
It was a square, with four tower-bastions, surrounded by a good

ditch, and communicating with the city by a double caponiere. From thence to the bridge over the Guerva the place was protected by a long line of wall and batteries; two Capuchin convents which came into the line were fortified, and served to flank it. A ditch was carried from one of these to the bridge, and the bridge itself secured by a *tête-de-pont*. A double retrenchment extended from thence to the memorable Convent of St. Engracia, which was made a sort of citadel; and from that Convent to the Ebro the old wall had been strengthened; this part of the city being covered also by the bed of the Guerva, and by the Convent of St. Joseph on the farther bank of that river, which had been well fortified, and was the most salient point of the whole circle, serving as a strong *tête-de-pont* to protect the besieged when they sallied in the direction of Valencia. The suburb beyond the Ebro was defended by redoubts and fleches, with batteries and traverses at the entrance of the streets. The artillery amounted to 160 pieces, the greater part being four, eight, and twelve pounders: what pieces there were of larger calibre had mostly been recovered from the canal into which the French had thrown them on their retreat. Great part of the cannon balls also were what the French had fired or left behind them. To prevent all danger from the explosion of their magazines, it was determined not to prepare a stock of gunpowder, but to make it day by day as it should be wanted; and this could easily be done, because Zaragoza was the place where all the saltpetre of Aragon was refined. There was no want of musquets, either for the inhabitants or the troops and peasantry with whom the city was crowded. The stores contained corn, wine, brandy, oil, salt-fish, and pulse, sufficient for six months' consumption for 15,000 men: this ought to have been the amount of the garrison; but fatal circumstances, and the more fatal error of supposing that the means of defence would be in

CHAP.
XVIII.
1808.

Cavallero,
74—80.
Rogniat,
4—6.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1808.

*The city
crowded
with sol-
diers.*

proportion to the number of the defenders, had doubled it. Palafox would have had the central army, as well as his own troops, take refuge there after the battle of Tudela. Castaños indeed led away the wreck of that army in a different direction ; but there were other persons in authority who, not having the same foresight, thought the best means of succouring Zaragoza was by increasing its garrison. The Central Junta fell into this error, and ordered the Valencian government to send thither all the force it could raise, which was not absolutely required for its own safety. A Walloon battalion, which had served during the former siege, was sent from Tarragona. A proclamation was issued from Zaragoza, inviting the dispersed soldiers to repair thither, and fill up the places of their brethren who had fallen in that holy cause, and were already in glory, enjoying their reward. By these means not less than 30,000 regular troops were collected there ; as many as 15,000 peasants entered the city to share in the dangers and merit of its defence ; and the hospitals were filled with the sick and wounded from Tudela, who had all been removed hither as the place to which they could most easily be conveyed.

*Cavallero,
82.**Prepara-
tions within
the city.*

Except in the great and fatal error of thus crowding the city with men, the means of defence were wisely provided. That the enemy would effect an entrance was not doubted ; traverses therefore were made in the streets which were near the wall, the doors and the windows of the ground-floor were walled up, communications opened within from house to house, and the house-tops parapeted to secure the defendants. Every householder, providing for life as well as death, laid in ample supplies. The convents were well stored. In the general fervour of national feeling men were as liberal of their means as of their lives. Nor was this feeling confined to those who could gratify it by taking an active part in military service, and by the expectation

or the enjoyment of vengeance: among instances of a rarer heroism that of a physician may be noticed, Miguel Guillen by name, who came from Valencia, and, refusing all pay, devoted himself to the service of the hospitals.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1808.

December.

*M. Moncey
reconnoitres
the Torrero.*

Marshal Moncey, on whom the odious service of besieging Zaragoza had been imposed, fixed his head-quarters at Alagon, while he waited for reinforcements, and preparations were making to commence it. At the end of November he reconnoitred the Torrero, a point which it was necessary to occupy before he could begin the siege; some warm skirmishes ensued, which tended to encourage the Spaniards, because the enemy, when they had well examined the ground, returned to Alagon. The importance of the Torrero seems not to have been duly appreciated by the Zaragozans; they contented themselves with throwing up some slight works there, faced with unburnt bricks. Moncey had with him 17,000 men, and was joined by Mortier with 14,000 in the middle of December. Meantime a battering train of sixty pieces was brought from Pamplona; projectiles also were supplied from the same arsenal; the country was compelled to furnish means of transport as far as Tudela, and there they were embarked upon the canal. All being ready, they appeared before Zaragoza on the 20th. Gazan's division crossing the Ebro at Tauste marched to Zuera and Villa Nueva; Suchet's took a position upon the right bank of the river, within a league of the city; and Moncey, following the right bank of the canal, placed one of his divisions on the left of the Guerva, opposite the great sluice, the two others on the right.

*The French
appear be-
fore the city.*

Rogniat, 3.

Buonaparte had declared that bombs and mines should bring Zaragoza to reason; and in the spirit of that declaration had prepared the fullest means for overpowering moral resistance by military force. Skilled as he was in the art of war, he did not, like a Mahomedan conqueror, reckon upon numbers for suc-

*They take
the Torrero.*

CHAP.
XVIII.

1808.

December.

cess : to have employed a larger army (even if the Austrian war had not occurred) would have been wasting men here who might be more serviceably employed in other quarters ; there was the difficulty of feeding them, and no danger could be apprehended from any efforts which might be made to raise the siege ; but the number of engineers was unusually large, and the means of destruction were in proportion. General Lacoste commanded this department ; he was perfect master of his profession, and having served with Buonaparte in Egypt, had acquired at the siege of Cairo some knowledge of the kind of difficulties with which he had now to contend. During the night the enemy erected a battery which commanded the Torrero, and was opened upon it at daybreak ; a false attack was made upon that post in front, where the canal covered it ; meantime another brigade, which under cover of the olive-yard of St. Joseph had got possession of an aqueduct the preceding evening, passed the canal under that aqueduct, and moved rapidly up the left bank with the intention of interposing between the city and the point of attack. The Spaniards were thrown into confusion by the explosion of an ammunition-cart ; and the exertions of a very able officer, and the example of a few steady corps, were not able to restore order or confidence. But, considering the distance of the Torrero from the city, they had expected to lose it, and prepared accordingly ; so that by blowing up the Puente de America they prevented the cavalry from pursuit, and retreated in good order. The officer who had drawn off his men from this position during the former siege had been put to death with circumstances of great cruelty. It was fortunate for San Marc, the general of the Valencian troops, who now commanded there, that Palafox knew how to appreciate his excellent talents and distinguished worth. For being a Frenchman, he was peculiarly obnoxious to suspicion ; and if he had fallen a victim to popular jealousy, the Zaragozans

*See vol. i.
p. 406.*

*Sebastian
Hernandez,
3—5.
Rogniat, 6.
Cavallero,
89.*

would have lost the ablest military man employed in their defence.

Meantime Gazan's division moved from Zuera and Villa Nueva, drove back a corps of Swiss, who were posted on the road to Villa Mayor, dislodged them with the loss of some 300 from the Torre del Arzobispo, and attempted to enter the suburbs by a coup-de-main. This was in conformity to Lacoste's opinion. Its success would materially have facilitated the progress of the besiegers, who might then have established breaching batteries upon the left bank of the Ebro, and opened a way into the city by demolishing the line of houses on the quay. D. Josef Manso, of the royal guards, commanded on that side; and after a severe action, repulsed the enemy: they renewed the attack with their reserve, and the Spaniards gave way. Palafox, who saw from a window what was passing, hurried across the bridge, cut down some of the runaways, and by his voice and example changed the fate of the day. Time had been gained for San Marc to arrive there with the troops who had retired from the Torrero, and the enemy were repelled with a loss which they stated at 400 men, and the Spaniards at 4000.

On the following day Moncey, who had fixed his head-quarters at the Torrero, addressed a letter to Palafox and the magistrates of Zaragoza, warning them that the city was now besieged on all sides, and all its communications cut off, and that he might now employ against it every means of destruction which the laws of war allowed. Madrid, he said, had capitulated, and thereby saved itself from the miseries which a longer resistance must have drawn on. Zaragoza, however she might confide in the courage of her inhabitants, could not possibly succeed against the means which were now brought against her, and her total destruction must be inevitable if she caused those means to be employed. He called upon them to spare the effusion of blood, and save so

CHAP.
XVIII.

1808.

December.

Unsuccess-
ful attack
upon the
suburbs.

Rogniat, 7.
Cavallero,
90, 1.

Moncey
summons
Palafox to
surrender.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1808.

December.

fine and so estimable a city, and to inspire the people with peaceful sentiments, as the way to deserve their love and gratitude. On his part, he promised them every thing compatible with his feelings, his duty, and the power which the Emperor had given him. Marshal Moncey was an upright and honourable man, unstained by any of the revolutionary crimes; what his feelings were may therefore well be supposed. Gladly would he have induced the Zaragozans to submit, that he might have saved himself from the enormous guilt of destroying the city and its inhabitants for resisting what he and every man in the French army who acknowledged the difference between right and wrong, felt in their hearts to be an insolent and iniquitous usurpation. Palafox replied to the summons, and told him it was in vain to think of appalling men by the horrors of a siege, who had endured one, and who knew how to die. If Madrid had capitulated (which he could not believe), it had been sold: and what then? Madrid was but a single place, and there was no reason why Zaragoza should yield, when there were 60,000 men determined to defend it. The Marshal had tried them yesterday, and his troops had left at the gates witnesses enough of that determination. It might be more fitting for him to assume a lofty tone, and talk to the Marshal of capitulating, if he would not lose his army before the town. The spirit of eleven million Spaniards was not to be extinguished by oppression; and they who had resolved to be free, were so. As for the blood which Marshal Moncey was desirous of sparing, it was as glorious for the Spaniards to lose it in such a cause, as it was ignominious for the French to be the instruments of shedding it.

Cavallero,
92.
Sebastian
Hernandez,
6, 7.

The invest-
ment of the
city com-
pleted.

During that and the ensuing day General Gazan completed the investment of the suburb. One of his brigades extended on the right of the Zuera road, the other on the left, with two battalions at the bridge over the Galego on the road to Valencia.

The swampy nature of the ground, upon which the inhabitants relied in some degree for their protection on that side, was favourable to the besiegers also, for it enabled them to form inundations along the greater part of their line, which secured them against any sorties. On the right bank Suchet's division, forming the left of the besieging army, extended from the Ebro to the valley of the Huerba; that valley was occupied by Morlot's; Meusnier's was encamped on the heights of the Torrero; and Grandjean's extended from thence to the Ebro on the other end of the bow, where a bridge of boats was laid, to establish their communication with the troops on the side of the suburb. It was determined to make three attacks; one upon the Castle of the Inquisition, with the view of employing the garrison on that side, which was their strongest part; one upon the bridge over the Huerba, where the name of that Pillar which was regarded as the palladium of the city had been given to the redoubt; and the third upon S. Joseph's: this was the immediate object of the enemy; they deemed it the weakest point, and thought to connect their attack against it with an attempt upon the suburb, where Lacoste still hoped that the French might establish themselves. The weather was peculiarly favourable to their operations, being at once mild and dry; the nights were long and dark, and every morning a thick fog effectually covered them from the fire of the besieged, who could never see where to point their guns till it was near mid-day. Meantime they were not idle; a line of counter-approaches was commenced which compelled the enemy to prolong their works, lest they should be enfiladed; sallies were made from S. Joseph's to interrupt them, and to cut down the olive-trees and destroy the buildings which afforded them cover; and on the last day of the year the Spaniards made a general attempt along the whole line. It was every where repulsed; but Palafox, who knew of what import-

CHAP.
XVIII.

1808.

December.*Rogniat, 7.**Cavallero,*
95.*Cavallero,*
94.
Rogniat, 9.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

January.

Proclamation of Palafox to the people of Madrid.

*Junot takes
the com-
mand of the
French.*

CHAP. XVIII.
1809.
January.
Proclamation of Palafox to the people of Madrid.

ance it was to excite a spirit of emulation in the troops, ordered those who had distinguished themselves by some partial success to wear a red riband as a badge of honour on the breast. He addressed a proclamation also to the people of Madrid. The dogs by whom he was beset, he said, scarcely left him time to clean his sword from their blood, but they still found their grave at Zaragoza. The defenders of that city might be destroyed, but compelled to surrender they could not be; and he promised that, so soon as he was at liberty, he would hasten to the deliverance of Madrid. All Palafox's proclamations were in the same spirit; his language had the high tone, and something of the inflation of Spanish romance, suiting the character of those to whom it was directed.

Junot takes the command of the French. At the beginning of the year Mortier received orders to move upon Calatayud with Suchet's division. It was thought that they would be more serviceably employed in keeping that part of Aragon in awe, than in forwarding the operations of the siege. The position which they left was filled up by extending Morlot's division, and securing its front by three redoubts. Moncey and Mortier, holding independent commands, appear to have been mutually jealous of each other; and Gazan, conceiving that his orders required him only to cover the siege, refused to make any farther attempt upon the suburb, after the severe repulse which he had sustained, strongly as the commandant of the engineers advised a second attack. The arrival of Junot to take the command did not put an end to this disunion: there were indeed plain indications, that if Buonaparte had died at this time, his generals, like Alexander's, would have made some atonement to mankind by taking vengeance upon each other. The works, however, went on, under a heavy fire; and on the 10th eight batteries were opened against St. Joseph and the redoubt of the Pillar. Colonel Mariano de Renovales com-

manded the former post, a man who made himself conspicuous throughout the whole course of the war by his activity and enterprising courage. An old brick convent, and works faced with unburnt bricks, were soon demolished; and in the night it was found necessary to remove the heavy artillery into the town, as it could no longer be used. A brave sally was made at midnight against one of the batteries; but the adventurers were taken in flank by two guns placed at the right of the second parallel, and being exposed to a murderous fire in front, retreated with considerable loss. The next day, the convent being in ruins, and the breach practicable, an assault was made in the evening; at the same time a party of the enemy, turning the convent, effected an entrance by a bridge which the besieged had neglected to remove, and obtained possession of the ruins. The French employed three days in repairing the works and connecting them with their second parallel. It had been an easy but an important conquest; for they were now secured against the garrison on that side by the river, and by an escarp eight feet high. On the 15th they attacked the redoubt... it was defended by the second regiment of Aragonese volunteers, and it was not till the works were reduced to ruins, and the flower of that regiment had perished, that the survivors retreated into the city, and blew up the bridge. A second parallel was then opened against the town, which had now no longer any defence on this side but its feeble wall and the houses themselves.

Meantime a tremendous bombardment was kept up upon this devoted city. The enthusiasm of the inhabitants was not abated by the loss of their outworks: from the beginning they knew that this contest must come to the knife's point, and the event of the former siege made them look with full hope for a similar deliverance. They were encouraged also by false rumours which arrived announcing a victory over Buonaparte by the

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
January.

*St. Joseph's
and the re-
doubt of the
Pillar taken*

*Rogniat,
11, 14.
Cavallero,
96.*

*Rumours of
success, and
rejoicings in
the city.*

CHAP. combined armies of Romana and Sir John Moore. Palafox
 XVIII. immediately announced it in an extraordinary gazette; it was
 1809. just as night closed; the people crowded into the streets and
January. squares, the bands of all the regiments were collected, bells
 were rung, salutes fired, and the multitude with shouts and ac-
 clamations of joy went in tumultuous procession to the Church
 of the Pillar, to return thanksgiving, and join in the hymn of
Salve Regina. The besiegers heard the music and the uproar,
 and ascribed to the artifices of Palafox and the other leaders
 what was in fact the genuine impulse of public feeling. By good
 fortune the bombardment was suspended at the time, but in the
 course of the night more than six hundred shells were thrown
 into the city.

Rogniat,
 15.
 Seb. Her-
 nandez, 13.

An infec-
 tious disease
 appears in
 the city.

The worst evil arising from the bombardment was one which
 had not been anticipated from that cause, and against which,
 had it been foreseen, it would hardly have been possible to pro-
 vide. A great number of the inhabitants retired into cellars,
 the women especially retreated there with their children, for
 security from the shells. In these long low vaults, where wine
 and oil had formerly been kept, they were crowded together
 day and night, where it was necessary to burn lamps during the
 day, and where fresh air entered as scantily as daylight. Such
 places soon became hot-beds of infection, and other causes con-
 tributed to extend the calamity. On the first day of the siege,
 when the attack was made upon the suburbs, part of the troops,
 exhausted by the previous exertions, were under arms for some
 hours in the Cozo, exposed first to a heavy snow, and then to a
 severe frost: this produced a catarrh, which proved infectious,
 and was soon followed by all the dreadful symptoms of camp
 contagion. The number of soldiers and of countrymen would
 at any time have crowded the city, but more especially now,
 when the inhabitants of all those houses which were prepared

and blockaded for street warfare were compelled to seek quarters in the inner parts of the town. The Murcian and Valencian troops came from a country where great part of their food consisted in fresh or preserved fruits; the mere change of diet from such aliment to garrison stores was sufficient to produce disease. They had also been used to drink well water: change of water is a cause of illness as frequent as it is unsuspected; and that of the Ebro, though it is preferred by the Aragonese to any other, is thought unwholesome for those who are not accustomed to it. To these causes must be added scantiness of food (an evil consequent upon the fatal error of crowding the place with men), unusual exertions, and the impossibility of recruiting exhausted strength by needful sleep in a city which was now bombarded without intermission; and among that part of the population who were not immediately engaged in the defence, fear, anxiety, and perpetual agitation of mind, predisposing the body for endemic disease.

Every rumour of success, however preposterous in its circumstances, and incredible in itself, was readily believed by the Zaragozans; they were too ill-informed to judge of probabilities, or to understand the real condition of their country; but this they knew, that if in other parts the Spaniards did their duty as devoutly as they themselves were discharging it, the deliverance of Zaragoza and the triumph of Spain were certain. They were always in hope that some vigorous effort would be made for their relief; and, to accelerate this, D. Francisco Palafox left the city, embarked at night in a little boat, and descending the Ebro and getting to Alcañiz, began to organize the peasantry, who lost no opportunity of harassing the enemy's communications. His situation, like that of the Marquez de Lazan, was truly pitiable; not only their brother, but their wives and families, were in Zaragoza, . . . to them more than to any other individuals the inha-

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
January.

*Attempts of
Lazan and
Francisco
Palafox to
succour the
city.*

CHAP. XVIII. bitants looked for succour, from the same hereditary feeling which had made them at the beginning of their troubles turn as it were naturally to the house of Palafox for a leader. But both 1809. it were ordinary men, unequal to the emergency in every thing except in good-will. General Doyle was in Catalonia; he had passed through Zaragoza on his way to that province, had commanded the Spanish cavalry in a spirited and successful affair at Olite a few days before the battle of Tudela, and as a complimentary memorial of that service, Palafox had formed a legion, and named it after him. From him also, as an Englishman, the Zaragozans expected aid, and if zeal and activity could have supplied the place of adequate means, their expectations would not have been disappointed. He had been indefatigable in his exertions for storing the city before the French encamped around it: he succeeded by repeated representations to the local and provincial Juntas in making them put Mequinenza in a state of defence, . . an old town with a castle which commanded the navigation of the Ebro, about half way between Zaragoza and its mouth; and he was now endeavouring to make Reding attempt something in aid of the besieged city.

*Condition
of the army
in Catalo-
nia.*

St. Cyr had not known how to improve a victory so well as the Spaniards did how to remedy a defeat. As soon as the fugitives from Molins de Rey brought the first tidings of their rout to Tarragona, the populace, supposing themselves to be betrayed, rose tumultuously, and took the power into their own hands. They blocked up the gates, unpaved the streets, and removed the stones to the windows and varandas, that they might be ready for a civic defence. They got possession of the arsenal, and distributed the arms and ammunition; they moved the artillery from one place to another, at the will of any one who fancied himself qualified to give orders; and they called out for the head of Vives, as the traitor who had been the cause of all

their misfortunes. In this imminent danger Vives made a formal resignation of the command, and Reding, upon whom it devolved, was enabled to save his life by letting him be put in confinement. The superior Junta, apprehensive alike of the populace and of a siege or an immediate assault, got out of the city as soon as they could (for the people had forbidden any person to leave it), and fixed themselves at Tortosa, leaving, however, two of their members to represent them in the Junta of that district. If while this insubordination prevailed the French had attempted to carry the place by a coup-de-main, they might probably have succeeded; but St. Cyr was not so well acquainted with the inability of the Spaniards as with the difficulties of his own position. A few days after the battle a strong detachment of French appeared before the city; the generale was beaten, the somaten was sounded from the Cathedral, one of the forts fired, and the place was in the utmost confusion, when a flag of truce arrived, with a request that an aid-de-camp of M. St. Cyr might be allowed to confer with General Vives. Reding, to whom the letter was delivered, suspected that the real intent must be to discover the state of the place; he communicated it to the Junta, and two of their members, with two officers, were sent out to know the purport of the mission. It was not without difficulty that these persons could get out of the gate, so fearful were the people of being betrayed; the general opinion was, that the French had sent to summon the town, and the universal cry was, that they would not capitulate, they would listen to no such proposals, they would die for their king, their religion, and their country. It proved, however, that the aid-de-camp came only to propose an exchange of prisoners. The impolicy of agreeing to this was obvious; but Reding knew how ill the prisoners on both sides were treated, and thought it due to humanity to exchange them. The advantage was wholly on the enemy's side; they received disci-

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

*January.**Reding
takes the
command.*

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

January.

*Cabanes,
p. iii. c. 13.*

*The army
reformed in
Tarragona.*

plined soldiers, who had now been many months in the country, and had had opportunities since their capture of observing the state of the Spaniards, and even learning their intentions, for every thing like secrecy seemed to be despised; and they gave in return only men of the new levies, not exchanging a single dragoon or artilleryman, nor one of the Swiss troops.

Reding was fully sensible how injurious it was that the enemy should thus be enabled to fill up their ranks; he suffered it, however, for the sake of mitigating the evils of a war in which he considered success absolutely hopeless. From the same hopelessness he committed the greater error of suffering himself to be surrounded by persons, some of whom were suspected by the superior Junta, and others by himself: but with this there was a generous feeling mingled; he would not, because they were unpopular, cease to employ men of whom he had a good opinion, nor would he upon a strong suspicion of guilt dismiss others as if they were guilty. His despondency was rooted in the constitution of his mind, but it did not make him omit any efforts for enabling the army again to take the field; and it was one happy part of the Spanish character, that no defeat, however complete and disgraceful, produced any effect in dispiriting the nation. The very men who, taking panic in battle, threw down their arms and fled, believed they had done their country good service by saving themselves for an opportunity of better fortune; and as soon as they found themselves in safety, were ready to be enrolled and take their chance again. Such of the runaways as had reached the Ebro, when they could get no farther, turned back, and came in troops to Tarragona. They came in pitiable condition, and without arms: . . . Reding knew not where to look but to the English for money and muskets, and a failure of powder also was apprehended, the materials having hitherto been supplied from Zaragoza. It would have

been madness to have attempted punishing any of these fugitives; the better mode of impressing upon them a sense of military duty was to let them see that their superiors could not behave ill with impunity: Reding therefore degraded one colonel and several inferior officers for their conduct at Molins de Rey, and made them serve in the ranks; but by posting them in advanced parties gave them an opportunity of retrieving their character and their rank. The government never acted with so much energy as when it was refitting an army after a defeat: its efforts were then such as the danger required. Two regiments arrived from Granada, a Swiss one from Majorca; supplies were sent from Valencia; men came in from all quarters as the hopes of the people rose, and by the middle of January the force in Tarragona was not inferior to that which had been so shamefully dispersed at Granollers. The men recovered heart, and acquired confidence from frequent success in the desultory warfare wherein Reding practised them. But he himself continued * to despond; and, in sad anticipation of defeat, deferred acting, when activity and enterprise might have found or made opportunities for success.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
January.

Cabañes,
p. iii. c. 13.

It was their victories which made the French most sensible of the difference between this and the other wars wherein they had been engaged;... the spoils of the field were the only fruits of success. These indeed had been of signal consequence in Catalonia; they had enabled St. Cyr to relieve Barcelona, to refit his troops, and to strengthen himself with a park of field-pieces. He had profited by the first panic to dislodge the Spaniards

Conduct of
the French
under St.
Cyr.

* M. Gouvion St. Cyr, who renders justice in other respects to General Reding, represents him as full of confidence at this time, and dreaming of a second affair of Baylen. It is upon the most indisputable authority, confirmed too by his own dispatches, that I have delineated his state of mind so differently.

CHAP. XVIII. from the pass of Bruch, which they had twice so gloriously defended; his troops had entered Igualada after the success, and the dangerous impression which his ostentation of justice and his observance of the humanities of war were likely to produce upon the wealthier classes, was seen by the conduct of the inhabitants, who seemed to think it a matter of indifference whether their houses were occupied by the national troops or by the French. But the system upon which Buonaparte carried on this wicked war rendered it impossible for any general to persist in a course of honourable conduct. The army which he had ordered into Catalonia was left to provide for itself, in a province which had now been many months the seat of war, and which never even in peace produced half its own consumption of corn. It had also to store the places of Rosas, Figueras, and Barcelona; for no attempt was made to bring provisions from France by land. (the pass indeed between Bellegarde and Figueras was so dangerous to the French, that they called it the Straits of Gibraltar); and it was seldom that a vessel could escape the vigilance of the British cruisers. Eleven victuallers intended for Barcelona were lying in the port of Caldaques under convoy of a cutter and a lugger, when Lord Cochrane landed his men, drove the French from the town, took their batteries, and captured the whole. St. Cyr, however humane by nature, however honourable by principle, was engaged in a service with which humanity and honour were incompatible: he could support his army by no other means than by plundering the inhabitants, and the Catalans were not a people who would endure patiently to be plundered. The difficulty was increased by the Moorish custom still retained in that part of Spain of preserving corn, not in barns or granaries, but in mattamores. In the towns these subterranean magazines were emptied before the French could enter; in the country they were so easily concealed, that, after

long and wearying search, it was a rare fortune to discover one. And the Miquelets and Somatenes were so constantly on the alert, that frequently when the marauders had seized their booty they were deprived of it. In this sort of warfare their loss was generally greater than that of the natives, who on such occasions had them at vantage. How considerable it must have been may be in some degree estimated from the fact, that in the course of seven weeks St. Cyr's foraging parties fired away not less than two million cartridges.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
January.

St. Cyr,
92—99.

But plainly as it would have been the policy of the Spaniards to confine themselves to the slow and sure method of weeding out their invaders, till they could bring their regular troops into a fit state for taking the field, the pressing danger of Zaragoza called for immediate efforts. Francisco Palafox, looking every where for that aid which was nowhere to be found, had gone to Cuenca, and proposing that Infantado should march the central army to his brother's relief, had been present at a council where the proposal was discussed, and had seen with his own eyes how utterly incapable that army was of engaging in such an attempt, or even of attempting such a march. Orders to undertake something for its relief had been dispatched from the Central Junta to the provinces of Valencia and Catalonia. The Valencians were offended with Palafox for having detained General St. Marc with a division of their army; no man contributed more by his military talents to the defence of the city than that general, but he and his men were now cooped up to die of pestilence, when they might have effectually served the Zaragozans in the field. Want of will therefore made the Valencians take only half measures, and these so tardily as to be of no avail. Neither did Reding manifest the feeling which he ought to have partaken upon this subject, partly because the sense of his own difficulties possessed him, and partly perhaps from a personal dislike to the Palafox family. One

Orders to attempt the relief of Zaragoza.

Infantado, Manifesto, 87.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

*January.**Tardiness
in obeying
them.**Defeat of
the pea-
santry.**Alcaniz oc-
cupied by
the French.**Rogniat,
17.**Movement
in Navarre
and Aragon*

natural consequence of thus delaying succour in quarters where there was most ability was to produce premature and rash attempts on the part of those who felt more generously. Palafox had written to say, that as long as provisions lasted, and there were ruins to shelter them, Zaragoza would not surrender. The place chosen for a depot was Mequinenza, and there, chiefly by the exertions of General Doyle, stores in considerable quantity were collected; but impatient of waiting, when time was so precious, till a well-concerted attempt to introduce supplies could be made, a Colonel who had several thousand peasants under his command moved to Belchite, within five leagues of Zaragoza, with a convoy under protection of this force, which was as unmanageable in a body, as it might have been efficient in its proper mode of warfare. The enemy, at the beginning of the siege, had stationed General Vathier at Fuentes with 600 cavalry and 1200 foot to command the country and collect provisions. This movement of the peasants was too near him to be concealed; he fell upon them, routed them with some slaughter, and got possession of all their stores. The pursuit led him as far as Ixar, and from thence he proceeded against Alcaniz. The peasantry whom Francisco Palafox had collected there drew up on the heights before the town, and withstood the attack with more firmness than might have been expected from such a force; but they were not equal to contend with disciplined troops; and Vathier occupied the towns of Alcaniz and Cuspe as long as the siege endured.

These misfortunes did not discourage the Spaniards, and the movements of the inhabitants both in Navarre and Aragon were formidable enough to excite some uneasiness in the besiegers. While the Navarrese bands interrupted their communication with Pamplona, the mountaineers of Soria threatened Tudela, and those of the Sierra de Muela endangered their hospitals and

establishments at Alagon. Lazan, meantime, with his brother Francisco, occupied the country from Villa Franca de Ebro to Licineña and Zuera, and sending detachments as far as Capav-
 rosa to intercept the enemy's convoys, straitened Gazan's division in their camp. More than once the French were without meat, and upon half rations of bread; and they might have been foiled a second time before Zaragoza, more shamefully than the first, if the heroism of the inhabitants had been in any degree seconded from without, and if the want of capacity in the Spanish leaders had not been as glaring as the want of order in the field and of reason in their councils. The besiegers had felt some ill effects from the latter cause; but an end was put to jarring pretensions and contrariant views when Marshal Lasnes arrived on the 22d of January to take the command. He had previously ordered Mortier to leave Calatayud, and act with Suchet's division on the left of the Ebro; having dispersed the force which Francisco Palafox had collected there, they took possession of Zuera, and scouring the country as far as Pina, Sarineña, and Huesca, secured the besiegers from interruption on that side. The French Marshal hoped that this might abate the spirit of the Zaragozans as much as it had cheered them when they saw the force of their countrymen upon the surrounding heights; and he addressed a letter to Palafox, telling him that the force upon which he had relied for relief had been destroyed, that the English had fled to Coruña and embarked there, leaving 7000 prisoners, and that Romana had escaped with them, his army with their officers having yielded to the Emperor: that Infantado had been defeated at Ucles with the loss of 18,000 men; and that if after this true statement he persisted in withstanding a force more than sufficient for effecting its purpose, the destruction of the city and of its inhabitants must rest upon his head. Palafox replied, that M. Lasnes would cover himself with glory if he were

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
January.

*M. Lasnes
takes the
command.*

*Rogniat,
18, 20.*

*He summons Pala-
fox to sur-
render.
Jan. 25.*

*Cavallero,
107.
Seb. Her-
nandez, 14,
15.*

CHAP. XVIII. to win the city by force of manly courage with the sword, and not by bombarding it; but that the Zaragozans knew their duty, and would not surrender.

1809.

January.

The French enter the city, but with great loss.

Jan. 26.

All the outworks had now been taken except the Castle of the Inquisition, which had never been seriously attacked, because its possession was of no importance to the enemy. The batteries against the city itself were completed, and on the day after the summons fifty pieces opened their fire upon the wall, and on the morrow three practicable breaches were made. One was by an oil-mill, a building standing alone, without the walls, and close to them; the enemy had established themselves in it during the night. The second was to the left of this, immediately opposite St. Joseph's; the third in the monastery of S. Engracia. All these were attacked. A column issuing from the oil-mill presently reached the first, and the explosion of two fougades at the foot of the breach scarcely appeared to impede their progress. But they found an inner intrenchment, well constructed and mounted with two guns; and when they attempted to carry this the bell of the Torre Nueva rang, the inhabitants manned the adjacent houses, and a fire was opened from roofs and windows which it was neither possible to return nor to withstand. Profiting, however, by the cover which the exploded fougades afforded them, they succeeded in lodging themselves upon the breach. On the left they were more successful; after gaining the ramparts, they made their way into the opposite house, which the artillery had breached, and into the two adjoining ones; their progress was then stopped, but they established themselves within the walls, and repaired and lengthened for their own use a double caponier, by which the besieged used to communicate with S. Joseph's. The attack upon the third breach was more formidable. After a severe struggle the enemy entered the convent of S. Engracia, obtained possession of its

ruins and of the nunnery of S. Joseph, which stood near, and of which little more than the mere shell was remaining. Piercing the walls of this, they enfiladed the curtain from S. Engracia to the bridge of the Huerba, and taking the *tête-de-pont* in reverse, became masters of the bridge, over which fresh troops joined them to follow up their success. They pushed on to the Capuchin convent of La Trinidad, which made part of the line; forty artillerymen, who were stationed there without support, as a place not in danger of attack, were cut to pieces at their guns, and the convent was taken. It was recovered by the Spaniards; but two battalions came to support the assailants, who took it a second time, and maintained their conquest, though at a dear price. The greater part of the French who occupied the curtain fell under the fire from the houses. They suffered also considerably in a vain attempt to possess themselves of a single house which defended an imperfect breach to the right of all their other attacks. Their whole loss was stated by themselves at 600, that of the besiegers at eight. The Spaniards, with better reason, believed that a much greater proportion of the enemy had fallen; and the French had in fact received so severe a lesson, that they determined not to risk any more direct attacks, but proceed always as much as possible under cover: there was danger otherwise that the troops would become impatient of so fatal a service, and even that all their efforts might be un-
Rogniat, 22, 26.
 Cavallero, 102—105.

As it was now no longer necessary to carry on the false attack upon the Aljafaria, the engineers were called from thence to fortify the Trinidad convent, and establish a communication with it and with a house by the bridge; commanding in this manner the whole intermediate space. During the night the Spaniards endeavoured to recover the ruins of S. Engracia and the adjoining houses, but without success. They attempted

CHAP.
 XVIII.
 1809.
 January.

The enemy establish themselves in the Trinidad convent.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

January.

Rogniat,
25, 28.
Cavallero,
105.

Convents of
S. Augustin
and S. Mo-
nica won.

Feb. 1.

twice also to regain the Trinidad, and once succeeded so far as to force open the church door: the enemy had formed an epaulement within of bags of earth, and fought to advantage behind that protection. A friar was at the head of the assailants, with a sword in one hand and the crucifix in the other; one of his brethren was killed in the act of administering extreme unction to a Spaniard who was mortally wounded; another took the holy oil from the slain, and continued to perform the same office to his dying countrymen. Women also mingled with the combatants, distributing cartridges to them, and bearing refreshments to their sons, their husbands, and fathers, and sometimes rushing upon the enemy when these dear relatives fell, to revenge their deaths, and to die with them.

The French had in vain attempted to get possession of the convents of S. Augustin and S. Monica. Having been repelled in assaulting the breaches, they sprung a mine under the partition wall, and by that means effected an entrance, turning all the works which the Spaniards had constructed for their defence. They forced their way into the church. Every column, every chapel, every altar, became a point of defence, which was repeatedly attacked, taken, and retaken, and attacked again; the pavement was covered with blood, and the aisles and nave of the church strewed with the dead, who were trampled under foot by the combatants. In the midst of this conflict the roof, which had been shattered by bombs, fell in; the few who were not crushed, after a short pause which this tremendous shock and the sense of their own escape occasioned, renewed the fight with increased desperation: fresh parties of the enemy poured in: monks, and citizens, and soldiers came to the defence, and the contest was continued upon the ruins and the bodies of the dead and the dying. It ended in favour of the invaders, who succeeded in keeping the disputed position. Taking ad-

vantage of the opportunity afforded while the attention of the Spaniards was directed to this point, they entered the Rua Quemada, where no attack was at that time apprehended, and got possession of one side of the street to the angle which it makes with the Cozo: their sappers were beginning to pierce the walls of the houses, barricade the doors and windows, and establish traverses in the street, when the Zaragozans charged them with redoubled spirit, drove them out with considerable loss, and recovered four houses which had been taken on a preceding day. At the same time an attack was made on the side of S. Engracia, when, after exploding two mines, the Poles got possession of some ruined houses; but in obtaining this success, General Lacoste, the French commandant of engineers, was killed. His opponent, Colonel San Genis, had fallen the preceding day: he was succeeded by Colonel Zappino, Lacoste by Colonel Rogniat.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
February.

*Rogniat,
27, 30.
Cavallero,
106.*

Now that the city was open to the invaders, the contest was to be carried on once more in the streets and houses. But the French had been taught by experience that in such domestic warfare the Zaragozans derived a superiority from the feeling and principle which inspired them, and the cause wherein they were engaged. They had learned that the only means of conquering it was to destroy it house by house, and street by street; and upon this system of destruction they proceeded. Three companies of miners and eight of sappers carried on this subterranean war. The Spaniards had officers who could have opposed them with not inferior skill; but men were wanting, and the art of sapping and mining is not one which can be learned on the spot where it is wanted; their attempts therefore were frequently discovered, and the men suffocated in their own works. Nor indeed had they been more expert could powder have been supplied for their consumption. The stock with which the Zaragozans began had been exhausted; they had none but what

*The enemy
proceed by
mining.*

CHAP. XVIII. they manufactured day by day, and no other cannon-balls than those which had been fired against them, and which they collected and fired back upon the enemy.

1809. February.

*Progress of
the pesti-
lence.*

*Miralles,
Elogio de
Zaragoza,
p. 42.*

*Cavallero,
71.*

The Zaragozans expected miracles for their deliverance ; and they exerted themselves so excellently well, that the French, with all their advantages, would have found themselves unequal to the enterprise in which they were engaged, and other armies must have been brought up to supply more thousands for the slaughter, if the defenders had not been suffering under an evil which in their circumstances it was equally impossible to prevent or to alleviate. The consequences of that evil, when it had once appeared, were but too surely to be apprehended ; and in bitter anticipation, yet while a hope remained, an Aragonese exclaimed, Zaragoza surrenders not, if God is neutral ! If the seasons had only held their ordinary course, this heroic people might a second time have delivered themselves. In that part of Spain January is commonly a wet month. Had the rains fallen as usual, the enemy would hardly have been able to complete their approaches ; had the weather, on the contrary, been severe, it might have stopped the contagion, and then the city would have had hands as well as hearts for its defence. But the season proved at once dry enough for the ground to be in the most favourable state for the besiegers' operations, and mild enough to increase the progress of the disease, which was now more destructive than the enemy, though no enemy ever employed the means of destruction with less remorse. When once the pestilence had begun it was impossible to check its progress, or confine it to one quarter of the city. It was not long before more than thirty hospitals were established ; . . . as soon as one was destroyed by the bombardment the patients were removed to some other building which was in a state to afford them temporary shelter, and thus the infection was carried to every part of Za-

ragoza. The average of daily deaths from this cause was at this time not less than three hundred and fifty; men stretched upon straw, in helpless misery lay breathing their last, and with their dying breath spreading the mortal taint of their own disease, who, if they had fallen in action, would have died with the exultation of martyrs. Their sole comfort was the sense of having performed their duty religiously to the uttermost... all other alleviations were wanting; neither medicines nor necessary food were to be procured, nor needful attendance... for the ministers of charity themselves became victims of the disease. All that the most compassionate had now to bestow was a little water in which rice had been boiled, and a winding-sheet. The nuns, driven from their convents, knew not where to take refuge, nor where to find shelter for their dying sisters. The Church of the Pillar was crowded with poor creatures, who, despairing of life, hoped now for nothing more than to die in the presence of the tutelary saint. The clergy were employed night and day in administering the sacraments to the dying, till they themselves sunk under the common calamity. The slightest wound produced gangrene and death in bodies so prepared for dissolution by distress of mind, agitation, want of proper aliment and of sleep. For there was now no respite neither by day nor night for this devoted city; even the natural order of light and darkness was destroyed in Zaragoza: by day it was involved in a red sulphureous atmosphere of smoke and dust, which hid the face of heaven; by night the fire of cannon and mortars, and the flames of burning houses, kept it in a state of horrible illumination. The cemeteries could no longer afford room for the dead; huge pits were dug to receive them in the streets and in the courts of the public buildings, till hands were wanting for the labour; they were laid before the churches, heaped upon one another, and covered with sheets; and that no spectacle of horror might be wanting, it

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.Sebastian
Hernandez,
p. 17.
Cavallero,
p. 108.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

*First talk
of surrender
in the city.*

happened not unfrequently that these piles of mortality were struck by a shell, and the shattered bodies scattered in all directions.

On the 1st of February the situation of the city appeared so desperate, that persons of approved and unquestionable patriotism came to the Regent of the Royal Audience of Aragon, D. Pedro Maria Ric, and besought him to represent to Palafox the necessity of capitulating; but Ric, with a spirit like that of Palafox himself, could not submit to this while there was any possibility of prolonging the defence. He knew that of all examples there is none which makes so sure and so powerful an impression as that of heroic suffering; and that if Zaragoza were defended to the last gasp, the influence of its fall under such circumstances would be not less honourable and hardly less salutary than a happier termination. Nor indeed would the people have consented to a surrender; their spirit was unsubdued, and the principle which supported it retained all its force. The worst effect of their sense of increasing danger was, that it increased their suspicions, always too easily excited; and to those suspicions several persons were sacrificed, being with or without proof hung during the night in the Cozo and in the market-place. The character indeed of the struggle was such as to excite the most implacable indignation and hatred against an enemy, who having begun the war with such unexampled treachery, prosecuted it with a ferocity equally unexampled in later ages.

*D. P. M.
Ric, Sema-
nario Pa-
triotico,
No. 28, p.
214.
Cavallero,
p. 110.*

*The contest
carried on
by fire.*

Four days the French were employed in forming three galleries to cross the Rua Quemada. They failed in two; the third opened into the cellar of an undefended house; thence they made way along great part of the street from house to house, and crossing another street by means of a double epaulement of bags of earth, established themselves in the ruins of a house which formed an angle of the Cozo and of the Rua del Medio. Their

next object was to get possession of the Escuelas Pias, a building which commanded some traverses made for defending the Cozo. The French often attacked it, and were as often repulsed; they then attempted the adjoining houses. The system of blowing up the houses exposed them to an evil which had not been foreseen, for when they attempted to establish themselves upon the ruins, the Spaniards from the dwellings near fired upon them with sure effect. They endeavoured therefore so to proportion the charge in their mines as to breach the house without destroying it; but to deprive them of the cover which they would thus have obtained, the Zaragozans with characteristic desperation set fire now to every house before they abandoned it. They began this mode of defence here, maintaining the entrance till they had prepared the building for burning; for so little wood was used in the construction, that it was necessary to smear the floors and beams with melted resin, to make them more combustible. When all was ready they then set fire to the place, and retired into the Escuelas Pias, interposing thus a barrier of flames between them and the assailants. The enemy endeavoured in vain to extinguish the fire under a shower of balls; and the time thus gained was employed by the Zaragozans in forming new works of defence. Unable to win the Schools by any other means, the enemy at length prepared a mine, which was discovered too late for the Spaniards to frustrate their purpose, but in time to disappoint them of their expected advantage by setting fire to the disputed edifice.

On the same day operations were renewed against the suburbs, where the enemy, at the commencement of the siege, had received so severe a repulse. General Gazan, availing himself of an ambiguity in his orders, had, after that lesson, contented himself with keeping up the blockade; nor could any representation induce him to engage in more active operations, till M. Lasnes

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.Rogniat,
30, 1.
Cavallero,
121.
Feb. 7.Convent of
Jesus taken
in the sub-
urbs.

CHAP. arrived with authority to enforce his orders. The Convent of
 XVIII. Jesus, situated on the road to Barcelona, formed part of the
 1809. defence on that side; the engineers, not having time to rase it,
 February. deeming it better that it should be occupied than abandoned for
 the enemy. Trenches were now opened against this building,
 and twenty battering pieces soon effected a breach, which was
 carried almost as easily as it had been made; but when the
 enemy, flushed with success, entered the suburbs in pursuit of
 the retreating garrison, they were driven out with great slaughter,
 as on their former attempt. They entrenched themselves, how-
 ever, on the ruins of the convent, established a communication
 with it, and lodgements on the right and left.

Rogniat,
 34, 35.

S. Francisco
taken.

The attack in the centre was pursued with the same vigour,
 and resisted with the same desperate determination. Every
 door, every staircase, every chamber was disputed; the French
 abandoned all attacks to the left for the sake of concentrating
 their efforts here, that they might the sooner reach the Cozo,
 extend themselves along it to the right as far as the quay,
 and thus connect their operations with those of Gazan on the
 other side the Ebro: and these increased efforts were met with
 proportionate exertions by the Zaragozans. Grenades were
 thrown from one floor to another, and bombs were rolled among
 the enemy, when they were so near that the Spaniards who
 rolled them expected themselves also to perish by the explosion.
 Their resolution seemed, if it were possible, to increase with
 their danger; every spot was defended with more obstinacy
 than the last; and this temper would have been, as it deserved
 to be, invincible, if pestilence the while had not been consuming
 them faster than fire and sword. The sense of honour as well as
 of duty was carried to its highest point; the officers preferred
 dying upon the stations which they had been appointed to de-
 fend, rather than to live after having lost them, though every

possible resistance had been made. On this side, after having occupied and been driven from the vaults of the Hospital, which had been reduced to ruins in the former siege, the enemy succeeded at length in carrying a gallery to the great convent of S. Francisco; . . . a countermine was prepared, which compelled them to stop before they could get under the walls of the convent. The engineer, Major Breuille, immediately charged the mine with three thousand weight of powder, and fired it, having drawn by feigned preparations for an assault as many Spaniards as he could within the sphere of destruction. The explosion was terrible, and brought down part of the building: the enemy rushed through the breach, and making way into the church, formed an epaulement there to establish themselves. Some Zaragozans who were acquainted with the building got, by passages connected with the tower, upon the cornices of the church; others mounted the roof, and broke holes in it, and from thence they poured down grenades upon the invaders, and drove them from their post. The ruins of this convent, which had been burnt during the first siege, and now shattered by the mine, were disputed two whole days, till the defenders at length were driven from the last chapel by the bayonet. For the advantage now both in numbers and in physical power was on the side of the enemy, the pestilence having so wasted the Spaniards, that men enough could not be provided to man the points which were attacked without calling up from the hospitals those who had yet strength enough to use a weapon.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
February.

Rogniat,
36.
Cavallero,
126.

From the tower of this building the French commanded the Cozo for a musket-shot distance on either side. After many desperate attempts their miners succeeded in crossing that street; but they were baffled in their attacks upon the University, and so many of their officers and best soldiers had fallen in this murderous struggle, that the disgust which ought to have been excited

The French
begin to
murmur.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

Rogniat,
38.

*Not even an
attempt is
made to re-
lieve the
city.*

by their abominable cause was produced by the difficulty which they found in pursuing it. Not the men alone, but the officers also, began to complain that they were worn out, though they had as yet only taken a fourth part of the town; it was necessary, they said, to wait for reinforcements, otherwise they should all be buried in these cursed ruins, before they could drive the fanatics from their last retreat. Marshal Lasnes represented to them, that destructive as the mode of war was, it was more so to the besieged than to them, whose operations were directed by more skill, and carried on by men trained to such service; that pestilence was doing their work; and that if these desperate madmen chose to renew the example of Numantia, and bury themselves under the ruins of their city, bombs and mines would not now be long in destroying the last of them. Marshal Lasnes was a man after the Emperor Napoleon's own heart; with so little honourable feeling, that he regarded the Zaragozans merely as madmen; and with so little human feeling, that he would have completed the destruction of the city and its last inhabitants with the same insensibility that he declared his intention of doing so.

S. Genis had repeatedly said, "Let me never be appealed to if there is any question of capitulating, for I shall never be of opinion that we can no longer defend ourselves." In the same spirit Palafox wrote to his friend General Doyle: "Within the last forty-eight hours," said he, "6000 shells have been thrown in; two-thirds of the city are in ruins; but we will perish under the ruins of the remaining part, rather than surrender." It was not by any promises or hopes of external succour that this spirit was supported. Palafox well knew that no efforts would be wanting on the part of his brothers, or of his friends; but he knew also what divided counsels and jarring interests were opposed to them, and that willing lives were all they could have

had at their command. General Doyle with great exertions got together ammunition and stores at Mequinenza, in the beginning of February; and the Marques de Lazan took the field from Lerida with a nominal force of 7000 foot and 250 horse to attempt something for the relief of the besieged city. It was soon learnt by their spies that a corps of 10,000 foot and 800 horse was ready to oppose them; and rather than make an attempt which must inevitably have ended in the utter rout of his ill-disciplined troops, Lazan waited at Monzon, to be joined by a division from Valencia, which the Junta of that kingdom had at last consented to send across the Ebro. But a French division in Aragon threatened to impede the junction: ammunition was wanted from Lerida, which the Junta of that city demurred at granting; time was consumed in miserable counsels and hopeless expectation, Lazan looking to Reding for some great exertion, and Reding deterred from attempting any thing, though with a superior force, by total want of confidence in his army, and the suspicion that whatever passed at his head-quarters was immediately communicated to the enemy; and thus while Lazan and his brother were in the most pitiable distress, knowing the state of Zaragoza, where their families were suffering under the unexampled horrors of such a siege, .. while every man in their division partook that feeling which the situation of the besieged excited in all their countrymen .. an anxiety as unexampled as it was great, .. and while every where it was expected that some efforts such as the occasion required would be made; even the most ready and devoted courage was of no avail where preparation, order, discipline, prompt judgement, and vigorous authority were all wanting; and though the province and the nation were in arms, Zaragoza was left to its fate without even an attempt to save it.

Meantime pestilence was consuming the Zaragozans faster

CHAP.
XVIII.
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*Progress of
the pesti-
lence.*

*Rogniat,
39.
Cavallero,
129.*

Feb. 12.

*The suburbs
taken.*

than fire and sword. The points which were not immediately threatened were now wholly manned by men who rose from their straw in the hospitals, and sate at their posts, unable to support themselves standing, wrapped in their blankets, and shivering or panting for breath, as the ague or the hot fit of the disease might prevail. The officer whose dreadful task it was to choose out patients for the service became in his turn a victim to the contagion. Hopeless of finding relief any where, the sick resigned themselves quietly to their fate; the dying and the dead were buried together beneath the houses which were blown up, or consumed in the flames; and the French found court-yards and chambers filled with corpses, and said themselves that they were fighting now only to obtain possession of a cemetery. The ravages of the disease were such, that many, bearing up with invincible resolution to the last, fell in the streets and died. The enemy did not remit their attacks while death was thus doing their work; they profited by the weakness of the besieged, and opening a fire from their batteries on both sides the Convent of Jesus upon the suburbs, made another attempt upon the feeble works where they had twice been repulsed with such great loss. A fire from fifty pieces soon made the way open, and the bridge being flanked by some of their guns, no succour could be sent from the city. Baron de Versaje, who commanded there, and had distinguished himself in the defence, was killed in repairing to his post. A breach was made in the Convent of S. Lazarus on the left bank; the garrison, exhausted by privations and fatigue and sickness, opposed all the resistance in their power, .. the greater number dying in its defence; and this edifice being taken, the Spaniards could neither retreat from the suburbs, nor hope to support themselves there, when they could no longer be supplied with food or ammunition from the city. Finding themselves separated by the enemy into two columns,

the one body crossed the bridge with considerable loss, and effected their retreat into the town; the other cut their way through the enemy, and endeavoured to escape in the open country along the bank of the Ebro; they were pursued by the French horse, and after sustaining a second action till their powder was exhausted, were taken prisoners to the number of 1500.

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Rogniat,
41.
Cavallero,
137.

The loss of the left bank exposed to the enemy the only part of the city which had not yet been open to their direct attacks, but had only suffered from the bombardment. On the other side, the University, after repeated attempts, had been taken, and the traverses which the Spaniards had so well defended in the Cozo. Palafox had now been seized with the disease. Capitulation had been mentioned at the last council in which he was present, and when it was asked how long the city could hold out, his answer had been, *hasta la ultima tapia*; "to the last mud-wall." Being now utterly disabled, he transferred all his authority, civil and military, on the night of the 18th, to a Junta, naming Ric to be the president. That noble-minded Spaniard immediately summoned the members, and they began their functions at one on the morning of the 19th. The chiefs of the various military departments were summoned to deliver their opinions. The general of cavalry represented, that there remained only sixty-two horses, and those weak and unserviceable, the rest having died of hunger. From a statement of the infantry it appeared that there were only 2822 men fit for service. Ammunition was nearly exhausted; there was none but what was manufactured in the Inquisition, and that would be destroyed if a shell should fall there. The commandant of engineers reported that the fortifications were demolished, there were neither men nor materials for repairing them, and all the cloth which could serve for bags of earth had been consumed. All the officers who had thus been consulted gave their opinion that the

The University
taken.

Palafox
transfers his
authority to
a Junta.

Condition of
the besieged.

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place ought to be surrendered, and that the Junta would be responsible to God and the King for the lives which every hour were sacrificed, if they persisted in resistance, now that it was become manifestly impossible to save the city. Having heard this melancholy representation, the Junta required General San Marc, who was one of their members, to express his judgement; the eminent talents and courage which he had displayed during the whole siege would render his opinion decisive both with them and the commander-in-chief and the people. He stated, that if the enemy made a general attack, which the preparations that were observed appeared to indicate, the loss of the city was inevitable, and would be followed by every imaginable horror. It was known with what fury the French treated every place which they conquered, and their rage would be greater here, on account of the hatred which they and their general and their bloody Emperor bore towards a city that had once put them to such shame, and now cost them so dearly. If the attacks were partial, such as those which were repeatedly made every day, they might hold out two days longer, or possibly four, provided men could be found for defence and for the works; longer than four days it was not possible to maintain the contest: San Marc concluded by declaring, that unless there were well-founded expectations of speedy relief, it was unjustifiable to sacrifice the lives which in these days must be lost, the loss of the city in that short time being unavoidable.

*Ric, Sem.
Patr. 215, 6.*

Upon this the Junta proceeded to make inquiry what expectations of relief there were: for this purpose the Duke of Villahermosa was sent to Palafox; but Palafox was now so ill that he could give no account of any thing, for the fever had fixed upon his brain. His secretary was applied to for any letters and documents which might be in his possession: he delivered in two, both of which were dated long back. One was a letter from

Francisco Palafox, saying, that after making the utmost exertions to collect troops, but in vain, he was then at Tortosa, assembling the peasantry with some soldiers from the garrisons on the coast, and that he designed to strengthen this force with some gunboats that were to be sent up the Ebro. The other was a scrap of paper, written in enigmatical terms (for it had to pass through the enemy's lines), and, as it was supposed, by the Conde de Montijo. It said, that the writer and the Duke del Infantado wished to come to the relief of Zaragoza, but the Central Junta had ordered that the Swiss should go, and that they were to fall upon Madrid. The Swiss was understood to mean General Reding; but he was so situated that no succour could be expected from him; for he was in Catalonia, and the enemy being masters of the suburbs, it was not possible for him now to cross the bridge. Moreover there could be no doubt, that other divisions of the French gave him full employment. These papers, therefore, only confirmed the Junta in their apprehensions that the French were victorious every where, and that in the general distress of the country they could expect no relief. CHAP. XVIII. 1809. February.

While they were deliberating the bombardment was renewed. They knew that the city could not hold out; twenty-six members voted for a capitulation, eight, with Ric among them, that they should still continue their resistance, urging that there was a possibility of being succoured. Such was the high spirit of these brave men, that the opinion of the minority was followed: for they who had voted for surrendering had done so for the sake of others, . . . for themselves, there was not one among them who would not rather have died than capitulated. They agreed to send a flag of truce to the enemy, requesting a suspension of hostilities for three days, that officers might in the meantime be sent to ascertain the situation of the Spanish armies, and according to the intelligence which might thus be obtained, they

*Flag of
truce sent to
the French.*

Ric, 216, 7.

CHAP. XVIII. would then treat for a surrender. Lasnes, when he had summoned the city, had proposed this method himself, . . . he now resented the proposal as an insult, and vented the most ferocious threats against the city, unless it were immediately delivered up.

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The flag was remanded with a second letter, reminding him that the proposal was originally his own: he did not vouchsafe to answer in any other manner than by a shower of bombs, and by ordering the attack to be renewed.

Ric, 217, 8.

*Last efforts
of the be-
sieged.*

In the evening of that day the quarter of the Tanneries was lost, a part of the strand leading to the stone bridge, and the Puerto del Angel, a point of great importance. Four cannon in the battery of the wooden bridge were spiked, treacherously it was supposed, . . . but there was no time for ascertaining this and punishing the traitors. The handful of men who remained were at their posts, manifesting their wonted resolution; but they were too few for the severe service to which they were exposed, and San Marc applied to Ric to reinforce with only 200 the points which were attacked, . . . more he did not ask for, knowing the deplorable state of the city. Ric had already charged Don Miguel Marraco, a beneficed priest of the Church of the Pillar, whom the general had commissioned to organise the peasantry, to provide men for the works, . . . he now sent him a note which would have excited him to new exertions had there been any remissness on his part. Don Mariano Cerazo, an honourable citizen, who had distinguished himself by his zeal and his influence with the people, was called upon in like manner; and certain priests also, who had united for the purpose of training and encouraging the peasantry, were requested in this emergency to furnish men. These measures, before the pestilence had so widely extended itself, would in a quarter of an hour have produced a thousand armed men. Ric ordered also the alarm to be beaten in the New Tower, and taking advantage

of a favourable moment, when the enemy were driven back by the bayonet from the Convent del Sepulcro, he sent the public crier through the streets to proclaim this success, and summon the people by sound of trumpet to complete the victory. But disease had subdued them; of the surviving population, the few who were not suffering under the disorder were attending their sick or dying friends, and neither hope nor despair could call them out, . . . hope, indeed, they had none, and the dreadful duty in which they were engaged rendered them insensible to all evils but those before their eyes. San Marc was joined by only seventeen men; ill tidings came upon him from every quarter; one commander complained that he was cut off at his station, another that he was on the point of being so, a third that he was undermined, . . . from every quarter they called for troops and labourers and ammunition, at a time when all were wanting.

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Ric, 218, 9.

Thus situated, the Junta ordered the almoners of the different parishes to inform their parishioners of the state of the city, and report the opinion which they should form in consequence. Two-thirds of the city had been destroyed; thirty thousand of the inhabitants had perished, and from three to four hundred persons were daily dying of the pestilence. Under such circumstances the Junta protested that they had fulfilled their oath of fidelity, *for Zaragoza was destroyed*; and they dispatched a flag of truce to the French commander, requesting a suspension of hostilities for four-and-twenty hours, that they might in that time negotiate for a capitulation. A French officer came with the reply, requiring the Junta to wait upon Marshal Lasnes within two hours, and declaring that after that time was expired he would not listen to any terms. Ric instantly summoned the Junta, and as they could not all be immediately collected, he proceeded with some of them toward Marshal Lasnes, leaving some to acquaint

D. P. Maria Ric goes out to treat with M. Lasnes.

CHAP. XVIII. the others with the result of the flag of truce, and to act as circumstances might require. They took a trumpeter with them to announce a parley, because the firing was still continued on both sides ; but, notwithstanding this, the Spanish deputies were fired at from one of the enemy's batteries. Ric protested against this violation of the laws of war, and refused to proceed till he was assured that it should not be repeated. An aide-de-camp of the French general had just before arrived, with instructions that the Junta should repair to the Casa Blanca, not to the suburbs, as had been first appointed ; this officer went for an escort of infantry, and conducted Ric and his colleagues to the general's presence. Lasnes received them with an insolent indifference, while his despite for the brave resistance which he had found betrayed itself in marks of affected contempt. He took some turns about the room, then addressing himself to Ric, began to inveigh against the Zaragozans for not believing him when he said that resistance was in vain, . . for which, he said, they deserved little consideration from his hands. He reproached the Junta also. Ric interrupted him. The Junta, he said, had commenced their sittings on the yesterday, and therefore could not be responsible for any thing before that time. The Marshal himself must feel, that if they had surrendered without having ascertained the absolute necessity of surrendering, they would have failed in their duty. When they were informed of the actual state of affairs, they had considered of a capitulation, and addressed a letter, proposing measures which he himself had suggested in the summons to which he now alluded. This had offended him, and he did not condescend to notice their second letter in explanation of the first. They had then dispatched a third flag, requesting a suspension of four-and-twenty hours, because they were accountable to the people, and that time was necessary for ascertaining the public will. Zaragoza,

which had so nobly distinguished itself by the manner of its resistance, must also distinguish itself in the manner of capitulating, when capitulation was become inevitable. “Acting upon these principles,” said Ric, “it is my duty to declare that I bring neither powers nor instructions, neither do I know the will of the people; but I believe they will accept a capitulation, provided it be reasonable, and becoming the heroism with which Zaragoza has defended itself.”

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Ric, 229—
231.

The manner and the manliness of this declaration were not lost even upon Lasnes: in spite of himself he felt the superiority of the men who stood before him, and, abstaining from farther insults, he said, that the women and children should be safe, and that the negotiation was concluded. Ric replied, it was not yet begun; for this would be surrendering at discretion, and Zaragoza had no such thought. If the Marshal insisted upon this, he might renew his attacks on the city, “And I and my companions,” said the noble Aragoneze, “will return there, and continue to defend ourselves; we have yet arms and ammunition, and daggers: war is never without its chances; and if we are driven to despair, it yet remains to be seen who are to be victorious.” This answer did not appear to irritate the French general; he knew, indeed, that though farther resistance could not possibly save Zaragoza, every inch which he had to win must be dearly purchased, and, for the honour of France, the sooner the siege was concluded the better; . . . it had already lasted too long. There was another reason, too, why he did not refuse to grant terms, . . . it would be in his power to break them. He called for his secretary, and dictated the preamble of the capitulation and some of the articles. The first stipulated that the garrison should surrender prisoners. Ric proposed that they should march out, as became them, with the honours of war; Lasnes would not consent to make any alteration in the words of the article, but he promised that those honours should

Capitulation.

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be allowed them, and that the officers should retain their baggage, and the men their knapsacks. Ric then required that Palafox might be at liberty to go whithersoever he pleased, with all his staff. It was replied, that an individual could never be the subject of capitulation ; but Marshal Lasnes pledged his word of honour that Palafox should go to any place he pleased ; and he specified Mallen or Toledo. Those places, Ric replied, would not suit him, because they were occupied by French troops, and it was understood that he thought of going to Majorca. Lasnes then gave his word of honour that he might go to any place which he thought best. It was demanded that all persons, not included in the garrison, who wished to leave Zaragoza, in order to avoid the contagion, should be allowed passports. Lasnes replied, all who wished it might go out, . . he pledged his word to this ; but it was not necessary, he said, to insert an article upon this head, and he was desirous of terminating the capitulation.

*Ric, 231, 2.**Farther
conditions
asked, and
refused.*

While copies of the capitulation were drawing out, the French general produced a plan of the city, and laid his finger upon the part which was that night to have been blown up, telling Ric that 44,000 lbs. of powder were already lodged for the explosion, and that this would have been followed by a cannonade from seventy pieces of artillery, and a bombardment from thirty mortars, which they were at that time mounting in the suburbs. The duplicates being signed, Ric and his companions returned to lay the terms before the other members of the Junta ; and they, who had ascertained the opinion of their fellow-citizens, accepted, ratified, and signed the act. Some farther stipulations, however, they still thought desirable ; they wished it to be stated in the articles, that the garrison were to march out with the honours of war ; for, as only the written capitulation would appear in the gazettes, if this were not expressed it would not be understood. They required also, that the peasants who had been formed into temporary corps should not be prisoners of war,

urging, that they ought not to be considered as regular soldiers, and representing the injury which it would be to agriculture if they were marched away. And at the petition of the clergy, they requested that an article might be added, securing to them the punctual payment of their revenues from the funds assigned by the government for that purpose. With these proposals Ric returned to Marshal Lasnes; the two former were in every respect unexceptionable; the last was the only one upon which any demur might have been looked for. The French commander, however, broke into a fit of rage, snatched the paper out of Ric's hand, and threw it into the fire. One of his generals, sensible of the indecency of this conduct, rescued it from the flames; and Ric, unable to obtain more, received a ratified copy of the capitulation, and returned to the city.

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February.Ric, 232—
4.

The French, by their own account, threw above 17,000 bombs during the siege, and expended near an hundred and sixty thousand weight of powder. More than 30,000 men, and 500 officers, the flower of the Spanish armies, lay buried beneath the ruins of Zaragoza; and this is far from the amount of lives which were sacrificed in this memorable and most virtuous defence, the number of women and children who perished by the bombardment, by the mines, by famine and pestilence, remaining untold. The loss of the besiegers was carefully concealed; it was sufficient to cripple their army; the Paris papers declared, that one part was to march against Lerida, another against Valencia, and neither of these movements could be effected.

On the evening of the capitulation the French troops entered. They began immediately to pillage. General Laval was appointed governor. He ordered all the clergy of the city to go out and compliment Marshal Lasnes; . . . the yoke was upon their necks; they went forth to appear at this ceremony, like prisoners in a Roman triumph, and as they went, the French soldiers

Conduct of
the French.

CHAP.
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Ric, 235.

*Treatment
of the pri-
soners.*

were permitted to rob them of their apparel in the streets. Laval, when complaint was made to him of such outrages, observed, that his troops had to indemnify themselves for the plunder which they looked upon as certain, and which they would have had in another day, if the capitulation had not disappointed them.

When the French entered the city six thousand bodies were lying in the streets and trenches, or piled up in heaps before the churches. The people, still unsubdued in spirit, were with difficulty restrained from declaring that the capitulation was concluded without their consent, and rushing upon the invaders with the determination of taking vengeance and dying in the act. The armed peasants, instead of delivering up the weapons which they were no longer permitted to use, broke them in pieces with generous indignation. General O'Neill died before the surrender; St. Marc was one of the many hundreds whom the pestilence carried off within a few days after it. P. Basilio escaped from the danger of the war and of the contagion. He was a man of exemplary life and great attainments; and having been tutor to Palafox, and fought by his side in both sieges, remained now at his bedside, to wait upon him in his illness, and administer, if need should be, the last offices of religion to his heroic and beloved pupil. There the French found him, as they had ever found him during the siege, at the post of duty; and they put him to death for having served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength. P. Santiago Sass suffered a like martyrdom. The officers received orders to come out of the city, on pain of being shot if they remained there after four-and-twenty hours. Immediately upon forming without the town for their march, they were, in contempt of the capitulation, plundered of every thing, stripped of the devices of their different ranks, and pushed

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in among the common soldiers as leaders of insurgents. It was affirmed in the French bulletin that 17,000 men laid down their arms: there were not more than four-and-twenty hundred capable of bearing them; the rest were in the hospitals, and this, with five-and-twenty hundred taken in the suburbs and during the siege, was the number which was marched off for France. Two hundred and seventy of these men, who from fatigue and weakness could not keep up the pace which their ferocious guard required, were butchered and left on the road, where their companions in the next division might march over their bodies. Augustina Zaragoza was among the prisoners. She had distinguished herself in this siege as much as in the former. At the commencement she took her former station at the Portillo, by the same gun which she had served so well; "See, general," said she, with a cheerful countenance, pointing to the gun when Palafox visited that quarter, "I am again with my old friend." Her husband was severely wounded, and she pointed the cannon at the enemy, while he lay bleeding among his companions by her side. Frequently she was at the head of an assaulting party, sword or knife in hand, with her cloak wrapt round her, cheering the soldiers, and encouraging them by her example; constantly exposed as she was, she escaped without a wound: yet once she was thrown into a ditch, and nearly suffocated by the dead and dying who covered her. At the close of the siege she was too well known by the French to escape notice, and they made her prisoner. Fortunately, as it proved, she had at that time taken the contagion, and was removed to the hospital, where, as she was supposed to be dying, little care was taken to secure her. Feeling herself better, she availed herself of this, and effected her escape. Another heroine, whose name was Manuella Sanchez, was shot through the heart. Donna Benita, a lady of distinction, who headed one of the female corps which

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*Treatment
of Palafox.*

*He is com-
pelled by
threats of
death to sign
orders for
delivering
up other
fortresses.*

had been formed to carry provisions, bear away the wounded, and fight in the streets, escaped the hourly dangers to which she exposed herself, only to die of grief upon hearing that her daughter had been killed. During the siege six hundred women and children perished, not by the bombardment and the mines, but in action, by the sword, or bayonet or bullet.

Marshal Lasnes had pledged his word of honour that Palafox should be at liberty to go wherever he would, as soon as he should be able to travel; in contempt of that pledge, he was immediately made prisoner, surrounded entirely by French, and left even in want of necessary food. Ric, who was ever ready to exert himself when any duty was to be performed, remonstrated against this treatment both verbally and in writing. He could obtain little immediate relief, and no redress. Arrangements were concerted for his escape, and so well laid, that there would have been every prospect of success, if he had been sufficiently recovered to make the attempt. They were not, however, altogether fruitless; for M. Lasnes having extorted from him, by threats of immediate death if he refused, orders to the governors of Jaca, Benasque, Monzon, and Mequinenza, to deliver up those places to the French, he found means to advise his brother, the Marques de Lazan, of the iniquitous proceeding, and to direct that no obedience should be given to orders so obtained. Unfortunately Jaca and Monzon had been entrusted to commanders who waited only for an opportunity of betraying their charge, and they opened the gates to the enemy. Before Palafox had recovered he was hurried away into France, a country from which and to which, while it was under the iron yoke of Buonaparte, no prisoner returned. On the way he was treated with insolence and barbarity, and robbed even to his very shirt. Buonaparte, who, feeling no virtue in himself, acknowledged none in others, had already reproached him as a coward and a runaway

in the field; he now, with contradictory calumny, reviled him for having defended Zaragoza against the will of the inhabitants. "The people," it was said in the French papers, "held him in such abhorrence, that it was necessary to station a guard before his door, for otherwise he would have been stoned. An idea of the detestation in which he and the monks of his party were held could only be formed by remembering the hatred with which those men were regarded in France, who governed by terror and the guillotine." Yet while they thus asserted at one time that Palafox defended the city against the will of the people, at another they affirmed that the Spanish troops would have surrendered long before, being perfectly sensible that resistance was unavailing after the French had entered the city, but it did not depend upon them, . . . they were obliged to submit to the wills of the meanest of the inhabitants. Any one who should have expressed a wish to capitulate would have been punished with death: such a thought could not be uttered till two-thirds of the city were lying in ruins, and 20,000 of its defenders destroyed by disease. . . . No higher eulogy could be pronounced upon Zaragoza than was comprised in the very calumnies of its unworthy conqueror.

Before the main body of the French made their entry they demanded of Ric 50,000 pair of shoes, 8000 pair of boots, and 1200 shirts, with medicines and every requisite for an hospital. Several of the officers demanded for themselves double equipage and linen, curtains, pens, paper, and whatever they wanted, insisting that plenty of every thing should be supplied them, and the best of its kind, at the expense of the city. A service of china was required for Junot; and this merciless oppressor, who had escaped the proper punishment of his crimes in Portugal, insisted that a tennis-court should be fitted up for his amusement, in a city of which two-thirds were then lying in ruins, beneath

CHAP.
XVIII.1809.
February.*Demands of
the French.*

CHAP. XVIII. which so large a proportion of the inhabitants lay buried ! Ric resisted demands which it was impossible for the city to supply.

1809. The French generals, provoked at his refusal to engage for the maintenance of their household, threatened to send in a squadron

February.

of hussars. He replied, that well they might, since the gates of the city were demolished and in their power, but that from that moment they would not advance a foot of ground till they had moistened it with French blood. Another member of the Junta, who had less courage, undertook that these ruffians should be satisfied as far as was possible. Ric, who was too true a Spaniard to live under the government of the Intruder, renounced the high office which he held, and, not being considered a prisoner, obtained his liberty.

Ric, 245—9.

Lasnes makes his entrance.

Lasnes made his entrance on Sunday the 5th of March ; his approach was announced by the discharge of 200 cannon, and he proceeded in triumph through that part of the city which remained standing, to the Church of the Pillar. The wretched inhabitants had been compelled to adorn the streets with such hangings as could be found, and to witness the pomp of festive triumph, and hear the sounds of joy and exultation. The suffragan bishop of the diocese, a traitor who had fled from the town when it took arms, and now returned thither to act as the instrument of the oppressors, met Lasnes at the great door of the church, and conducted him in procession, with the crucifix and the banner, to a throne prepared before the altar, and near the famous idol, which had escaped destruction. Then the wretch addressed a sermon to his countrymen upon the horrors of war ! “ They had seen,” he said, “ in their unhappy city, the streets and market-places strewn with dead, parents expiring and leaving their children helpless and unprotected, babes sucking at the dry breast of the famished mother, palaces in ruins, houses in flames, dead bodies heaped at the doors of the churches, and

Baseness of the suffragan bishop.

hurried into common graves without any religious ceremony. And what had been the cause of all this ruin? I repeat it," said the villainous time-server, "I shall always repeat it, your sins and your seditious spirit, your forgetfulness of the principles of the gospel. These horrors have ceased: and to whom are you indebted for this unexpected happiness? To God in the first place, who raises and destroys monarchies according to his will; after God, to the Virgin of the Pillar, who interceded for us; and in the next place to the generous heart of the great Napoleon, the man who is the messenger of God upon earth to execute his divine decrees, and who is sent to punish us for our sins. Nothing can equal his power except his clemency and his goodness! He has granted us the inestimable favour of peace; oh that, at the expense of my tears and my blood, I could render it eternal! It is fitting, O my God, that for this great and unexpected mercy, this signal mercy, we should all exclaim, *Te Deum Laudamus!* We praise thee, O God!" Such were the blasphemies which this hoary traitor uttered over the ruins of his heroic city! It is not possible to record them without feeling a wish, that some one of the noble-hearted Zaragozans, who at that hour of bitterness were wishing themselves in the grave, had smitten him upon the spot in the name of his religion and his country.

The oath of obedience and allegiance was then administered to those persons who either retained or accepted office under the Intruder's government. A superb entertainment followed, at which Lasnes and his chief officers sate down to a table of four hundred covers, and at every health which was drunk to the family of Buonaparte the cannons were discharged. The transactions of the day furnished a fine topic for the journalists at Paris. "All the people," they said, "manifested their joy at so sudden and happy a change in acclamations of 'long live the Emperor!' they were edified by the behaviour of their conquerors

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
February.

*Language
of the
French.*

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

*Decree of
the Central
Junta.*

during the religious ceremony ; that ceremony had melted the most obdurate hearts, the hatred of the French was eradicated from all breasts, and Aragon would soon become one of the most submissive provinces in Spain !” At the time when these falsehoods were circulated in France, Junot issued a proclamation, declaring, that every Aragonese found in arms should be punished with death. Upon this the Supreme Junta addressed an order to their generals, requiring them to apprise the French commanders to whom they might be opposed, that every Spaniard who was capable of carrying arms was a soldier, so their duty required them to be, and such the Supreme Junta declared them : “ This,” they said, “ was not a war of armies against armies, as in other cases, but of an army against a whole nation, resisting the yoke which a tyrant and usurper sought to force upon them ; every individual, therefore, of that nation was under the protection of the laws of war, and the general who should violate those laws was not a soldier, but a ruffian, who would provoke the indignation of Heaven, and the vengeance of man. The Junta well knew,” they said, “ that the French, when they were victorious, ridiculed principles which the observance and respect of all nations had consecrated, and that they did this with an effrontery and insolence equal to the affectation with which they appealed to them when they were vanquished. The Spaniards were, however, in a condition to enforce that justice which they demanded. Three Frenchmen should suffer for every Spaniard, be he peasant or soldier, who might be put to death. Europe would hear with admiration as well as horror, that a magnanimous nation, which had begun its struggle by making 30,000 prisoners, was forced, in opposition to its natural character, to decimate those prisoners without distinction, from the first general to the meanest in the ranks. But it was the chiefs of their own nation who condemned these unfortunate wretches, and who, by imposing upon Spain

the dreadful necessity of retaliation, signed the death of their own countrymen when they murdered a Spaniard." CHAP. XVIII.

The Junta pronounced the funeral oration of Zaragoza, in an address to the people. "Spaniards," said they, "the only boon which Zaragoza begged of our unfortunate monarch at Vittoria was, that she might be the first city to sacrifice herself in his defence. That sacrifice has been consummated. More than two months the murderous siege continued; almost all the houses were destroyed, those which were still standing had been undermined; provisions were nearly exhausted, ammunition all consumed; 16,000 sick were struggling with a mortal contagion, which every day hurried hundreds to the grave; the garrison was reduced to less than a sixth part; the general dying of the pestilence; O'Neill, the second in command, dead; St. Marc, upon whom the command then devolved, prostrated by the fever: so much was required, Spaniards, to make Zaragoza yield to the rigour of fate, and suffer herself to be occupied by the enemy. The surrender was made upon such terms as the French have granted to other towns, and those terms have been observed as usual by the perfidious enemy. Thus only were they able to take possession of those glorious precincts, filled only with demolished houses and temples, and peopled only with the dead and the dying; where every street, every ruin, every wall, every stone, seemed mutely to say to the beholder, Go, tell my king, that Zaragoza, faithful to her word, hath joyfully sacrificed herself to maintain her truth." 1809.
February.
*Address to
the nation.*

"A series of events, as mournful as they are notorious, frustrated all the efforts which were made to relieve the city; but the imagination of all good men accompanied her defenders in their dangers, was agitated with them in their battles, sympathised in their privations and efforts, and followed them through all the dreadful vicissitudes of their fortune; and when strength

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

failed them at last through a continued resistance, which they had prolonged almost beyond belief, in the first moment of grief it seemed as if the light of liberty had been at once extinguished, and the column of independence overthrown. But, Spaniards, Zaragoza still survives for imitation and example! still survives in the public spirit which, from her heroic exertions, is for ever imbibing lessons of courage and of constancy. For where is the Spaniard, priding himself upon that name, who would be less than the Zaragozans, and not seal the liberty of his country, which he has proclaimed, and the faith to his king, which he has promised, at the cost of the same perils and the same labours? Let the base, the selfish, and the cowardly be dismayed by them; not the other towns of Aragon, who are ready to imitate and to recover their capital; not the firm and faithful patriots, who see in that illustrious city a model to imitate, vengeance to be exacted, and the only path of conquest. Forty thousand Frenchmen, who have perished before the mud walls of Zaragoza, cause France to mourn the barren and ephemeral triumph which she has obtained, and evince to Spain, that three cities of equal resolution will save their country, and baffle the tyrant. Valour springs from valour; and when the unhappy who have suffered, and the victims who have died there, shall learn that their fellow-citizens, following them in the paths of glory, have surpassed them in fortune, they will bless their destiny, however rigorous it has been, and rejoice in the contemplation of our triumphs.

“Time passes away, and days will come when these dreadful convulsions, with which the genius of iniquity is now afflicting the earth, will have subsided. The friends of virtue and patriotism will come to the banks of the Ebro to visit those majestic ruins, and beholding them with admiration and with envy, Here, they will say, stood that city which in modern ages realised, or, more truly, surpassed those ancient prodigies of devotement

and constancy, which are scarcely credited in history ! Without a regiment, without other defence than a weak wall, without other resources than its courage, it first dared to provoke the fury of the tyrant : twice it withstood the force of his victorious legions. The subjection of this open and defenceless town cost France more blood, more tears, more slaughter, than the conquest of whole kingdoms : nor was it French valour that subdued it ; a deadly and general pestilence prostrated the strength of its defenders, and the enemy, when they entered, triumphed over a few sick and dying men, but they did not subdue citizens, nor conquer soldiers."

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.
February.

This address was followed by a decree, declaring " that Zaragoza, its inhabitants, and garrison, had deserved well of their country, in an eminent and heroic degree : That whenever Palafox should be restored to liberty, to effect which no efforts on the part of the government should be wanting, the Junta, in the name of the nation, would confer upon him that reward which might seem most worthy of his unconquerable constancy and ardent patriotism : That every officer employed in the siege should be promoted one step, and every private soldier enjoy the rank and the pay of serjeant : That all the defenders of Zaragoza, and its inhabitants, and their heirs, should enjoy personal nobility : That pensions, conformable to their rank and circumstances, should be granted to the widows and orphans of all who had perished there : That the having been within the walls during the siege should be considered as a claim in future pretensions : That Zaragoza should be exempt from all contributions for ten years, from the time when peace should be established ; and that at that time the rebuilding of the public edifices, with all possible magnificence, should be begun at the expense of the state, and a monument erected in the great square of the city,

*Honours
decreed to
the inha-
bitants.*

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

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in perpetual memory of the valour of the inhabitants and their glorious defence: 'That in all the cities of the kingdom an inscription should forthwith be set up, relating the most heroic circumstances of the two sieges, and a medal be struck in its honour, as a testimony of national gratitude. Finally, the Junta promised the same honours and privileges to every city which should resist a like siege with like constancy, and proposed rewards for the best poem and best discourse upon this memorable event; the object being not only to hold up the virtues of the Zaragozans to the present generation and to posterity, but to inflame the hearts of the Spaniards with the same ardent patriotism, the same love of freedom, and the same abhorrence of tyranny.'

*Falshoods
of the
French go-
vernment.*

The capitulation was published by the Intruder's ministers in the Madrid gazette, and inserted in a French journal printed in the same capital. That journal was suppressed by order of Buonaparte as soon as he was informed of this; and it was stated in his bulletin that Lasnes would allow no capitulation, and had only published certain provisions as his * pleasure; and that the French possessed themselves of the whole town by force. Had the facts been thus, it would not have derogated in the slightest degree from the heroism of a people who had discharged their

* Baron Rogniat also in his relation of the siege says, *le Maréchal exigea que la ville se rendit à discretion* (p. 44), and omits to say that terms of capitulation were required and granted. Baron Rogniat declares that one of his motives for publishing this relation, which he was not permitted to do during the reign of Buonaparte, was to celebrate the glory of his comrades. For a man of honour and humanity to have been in the course of military service involuntarily engaged in effecting such a conquest, would be the greatest of all misfortunes; but to look back upon it with complacency, and record it as glorious, is a crime.

duty to the uttermost. But the falsehood is worthy of notice, not only as showing Napoleon Buonaparte's systematic disregard of truth, but as exemplifying also that want of generosity which peculiarly characterized him, and made him incapable of doing justice in any one instance to the principles, virtues, talents, or even courage, of those by whom he was opposed.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
February.

CHAPTER XIX.

INVASION OF PORTUGAL BY MARSHAL SOULT.

1809.

*Portugal
threatened
by the
French.*

*Prepara-
tions by the
English for
evacuating
Lisbon.*

THE conquest of Portugal was announced by Buonaparte not less confidently than his sentence of subjugation against Zaragoza; and no difficulty was expected in effecting it. It was stated in the bulletins that the rage of the Portuguese against the English was at its utmost height; that they were as indignant at the perfidy of their allies as they were disgusted by their difference of manners and religion, by their brutal intemperance, and by that arrogance which made these islanders odious to the whole continent; that bloody affrays between them were occurring every day, and that the British garrison of Lisbon had embarked in order to abandon a people whom they had deceived and outraged. The real state of things gave some plausibility to these falsehoods; for the French were well informed of the alarm that prevailed in Lisbon, which was indeed such as seemed to justify their vaunts, and might easily enable them to accomplish their purpose. Preparations had been made for evacuating that capital; transports were collected in the Tagus, and notice officially given to the British merchants to hold themselves in readiness for immediate embarkation in case the enemy should advance towards them. These measures were taken early in January, before it was known that Sir John Moore was retreating. As soon as intelligence of his retreat was received, the Regency

communicated it to the people. “Portugueze,” they said, “the governors of the kingdom do not mean to deceive you. They themselves announce that the armies of Moore and Romana have retired to the interior of Galicia, leaving our frontiers uncovered; that those frontiers, from their great extent, are exposed to invasion; that the Emperor of the French is accustomed to employ his whole force when he attacks a nation; that his rapid marches give no time for the reunion of troops to act against him on the defensive; and that he presses on to the capital, endeavouring to surprise the government, and to spread anarchy and confusion. This mode of warfare exposes some cities and towns to the ravages of invasion; but such partial ravages are not the ruin of a state. It was in the centre of Portugal that our ancestors sealed our independence with their blood. Knowing this, the governors have directed their measures accordingly; strong passes, formed by nature to be the bulwarks of our liberty, and deep rivers, which cannot without danger be crossed, will be defended in a military manner; and if, in spite of this, the enemy of Europe should proceed to Lisbon, he will find around it a determined people, who will cause the glorious deeds of those times to be remembered, when the walls of that city were the scene of their heroism and their triumph.”

This was wise language, and though it proceeded from a government on which they had little reason to rely, the Portugueze answered the appeal with enthusiasm. The squares were filled, the streets lined with volunteers, practising their evolutions with a zeal deserving better teachers than it found. In these ranks the old man and the stripling stood side by side, . . . all pedantry of inches and proportion was forgotten; the strength to carry arms, and the heart to use them, were the only qualifications required. Some were armed with fowling-pieces, some with bayonets screwed upon poles, some with pikes and halberds,

CHAP.
XIX.
1809.
February.

*Address of
the Regency
to the Por-
tugueze.*

*State of
public feel-
ing at Lis-
bon.*

CHAP. which for centuries had hung idly in the hall ; bullets were piled
XIX. up in heaps at every stall, with flints and ramrods ; and rusty
1809. weapons of all kinds were brought out from the dust to answer
February. the general demand for arms. The children with their flags and wooden guns were playing at soldiers, imitating the discipline of their fathers with that spirit which, if well fostered and directed, would render any country invincible. There was no want of courage, of enthusiasm, or of patriotic feeling ; but the people had none to direct and train them, none to whom they could look with confidence.

It was the beginning of February before the news arrived of Sir John Moore's death, and that his army had withdrawn from Spain. Fourteen thousand English troops had been left at Lisbon when that army began its march. Some regiments had advanced to the frontiers, that they might be near the commander-in-chief if he should require to be reinforced, or find it expedient to fall back upon them. These, learning that he had retreated by a different route, and that superior forces were hastening against them, returned by forced marches to the capital. Every thing was in confusion there. One day the cavalry was embarked, the next it was relanded. The sea batteries were dismantled, and their guns shipped for Brazil ; those at Fort St. Julien alone were left mounted, as a defensible post if the British troops should be forced to embark precipitately. The women belonging to the army were sent on board. These preparations exasperated the people : they were eager to do whatever should be required of them in the defence of their country : that their own governors wanted courage or ability to stand by them was nothing more than what they expected ; but from the English, the old and faithful friends of the Portuguese, they looked for that assistance which England had never refused to Portugal in its time of need. The feeling which this intended abandonment produced was rather anger than fear ;

and they resented it more as if they felt ashamed for allies long trusted, and always found worthy, than alarmed for the consequences to themselves. A party of the armed populace seized the English ambassador's baggage, which was packed up for removal. The government affected to consider this as the work of French emissaries, though it was evidently a manifestation of the general temper. Threats of condign punishment were denounced against any person who should again offer insult to a British subject; and the people were assured it was only by the powerful assistance of the British army that their national independence could be maintained.

The bulletins had announced that Marshal Soult would cross the Minho from Tuy on the 11th of February, reach Porto by the 20th, and Lisbon by the 28th. His instructions were to march along the coast, as the shortest and most convenient line, where, though there was no high road, there were no mountains, and the ways every where practicable for carriages; he was to govern the country as Junot had done, and induce the people as soon as possible to request from Napoleon a King of his appointment. The nominal force allotted him was 50,000 men, and the staff might have sufficed for twice that amount; but the efficient numbers fell far short. They had suffered much in the battle of Coruña; they had suffered also by their rapid advance through so difficult a country in the severest weather: and in means also they were deficient; for though it was their system to take whatever they required, they were now in a province where little was to be found. Plate, jewels, indigo, Peruvian bark, whatever marketable plunder Galicia afforded, these dealers in wholesale rapine shipped from Coruña for France. Articles of immediate necessity were not so readily obtained. The military hospitals were in want of every thing, even rags for the wounded, for linen here was a luxury not in general use. The mills of that country

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

February.

Feb. 24.

*M. Soult
ordered to
enter Por-
tugal from
Galicia.*

*Difficulty of
providing
for the
French
army.*

CHAP. (which are of the simplest construction, working by a single
 XIX. horizontal wheel) were so small, that ninety of them could not
 1809. supply more flour in a day than was required for the daily
 February. consumption of the invading army; and as the invaders could
 find no Spaniards to serve them, they were obliged to draw not
 only millers, but bakers and butchers from the regiments. Grain
 was scarce, Galicia being a grazing province, which at no time
 produced more than a third of what its own inhabitants required.
 The summary mode of stripping them by requisitions, to which
 the French as usual resorted, was in this instance impeded by
 their own people: for the detachments who were stationed in
 different parts to keep the communication open, finding how
 scanty the resources were, and apprehending that if food were
 sent away they should be left without it, suffered the orders of the
 commissariat to be neglected, and took care of themselves alone.

*Mém. sur
 les Opéra-
 tions du M.
 Soult, 56,
 60.*

*His con-
 fidence of
 success.*

*Intercepted
 letter to Jo-
 seph.
 Feb. 4.*

*Combined
 plans of the
 French.*

*Oper. du M.
 Soult, p. 50.*

Marshal Soult, however, entered upon his expedition in full confidence of success. He believed that a great proportion of the British troops had perished by shipwreck during the heavy gales which had prevailed after their embarkation; that they had determined as soon as he should approach Lisbon to blow up the magazines and arsenals, and abandon the place; that they talked of nothing more enterprising than a landing at Quiberon; and that this was a mere vaunt, for certainly it would be long before their army would be again in a condition to show itself.

The plan which had been laid down for him was well concerted. Marshal Victor was to manœuvre on the side of Badajoz, and send a column in the direction of Lisbon to facilitate the operations against that city. Lapisse was to threaten the frontier between the Douro and Almeida, occupy Ciudad Rodrigo, march upon Abrantes as soon as Soult should have reached Porto, and when that general was master of Lisbon, Lapisse was then to join Victor, and enter Andalusia, the conquest of the south

of Spain as well as Portugal being considered certain. Ney, meantime, was to occupy Galicia, and communicate with the army of Portugal. Leaving him in command of this province, which was said to be subjugated, Soult removed his head-quarters to Santiago, and ordered General Lahoussaye from Mellid to march upon Ribadavia and Salvatierra, obtain intelligence of Romana's movements, and ascertain what means might be found there for crossing the Minho. General Franceschi at the same time was dispatched with his light cavalry to take possession of Tuy, and examine whether the passage might not best be effected near that city; and General Merle with a division of infantry was sent from Betanzos to Pontevedra to support them. Franceschi fell in with a body of Spaniards at Redondela, and took from them four guns. Profiting by the panic which the fugitives were likely to impart, he sent a detachment to summon Vigo, and the governor was weak or treacherous enough to surrender a fortified and well-provided town at the first summons of a division of cavalry. Tuy also, which in former wars had been a place of great importance, the strongest upon that frontier, was entered without resistance. Somewhere below this city it was resolved to attempt the passage, and there accordingly the main body of the army was collected.

Two rivers, the Lama and Tamboga, which rise in the north-east part of Galicia, unite and form the Minho; but the Sil, which joins it with an equal body of waters, is believed to have been the Minius of the ancients. It is the boundary between Spain and Portugal along a considerable line; upon that line it is never fordable, except at one place above Melgaço, and there only after an unusual continuance of dry weather. There is no bridge over it below the city of Orense, and the Portuguese had been sufficiently aware of their danger to remove all the boats to their own side of the river. Just at its mouth it is joined

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

February.*Vigo and
Tuy occu-
pied by the
French.**Prepara-
tions for
crossing the
Minho be-
low Tuy.*

CHAP. from the Portugueze side by the river Coura ; each stream has
 XIX. formed a bar, and upon an island between these bars the Por-
 1809. tugueze had a fortress and a small Capuchine convent. On the
February. Spanish side, immediately at the mouth of the river, Mount St.
 Feb. 10. Thecla rises, a place of great local celebrity, because of an
 annual pilgrimage, and known to sailors as a sea-mark. On the
 other side of this mountain is the little port and town of S. Maria
 de la Guardia, and thither Soult went with the captain of a
 French frigate and some seamen who had been prisoners at Co-
 ruña, to reconnoitre and consult concerning the passage. Means
 of transport were found in the fishing-boats of Guardia ; but it
 would have been difficult to double the point in them when
 laden as they must have been for that service, and they would
 have been perilously exposed to the fire of the island. He
 determined, therefore, to carry the boats overland a distance
 of about three miles to a lake or broad, from which the little
 river Tamuga issues, and enters the Minho above the village
 of Campos Ancos. There was great difficulty in removing
 them, and still more in conveying two pieces of artillery to the
 same place. Means, however, for transporting three hundred
 men at once were collected, and the troops appointed for this
 service were exercised in embarking and disembarking on the
 lake, where it could be done in safety. The attempt was to be
 made at high-water, and under favour of the night, though little
 danger was apprehended from the old frontier fortress of Ca-
 minha, in the face of which they were to cross ; for the works,
 originally ill planned and ill situated, had long been neglected,
 and the French held in equal contempt the place and the people
 by whom it was garrisoned. However, in order to deceive
 them, the troops were withdrawn from the opposite shore, and a
 Feb. 15. feint made of marching up the river. The flotilla descended
 the Tamuga easily and in good order ; but when they came into

*Failure of
the attempt.*

the great stream the want of sailors was felt. The boats separated; those that were best manned reached the shore; but the Portuguese were upon the alert. General Bernardim Freire, who had been appointed to the command of Porto and of that province, had sent a detachment with two six-pounders to this point. They kept up a fire with good effect; the tide turned; the other boats unable to stem it, or approach the shore, where they could assist their comrades, found it necessary to return; some were sunk, and about forty men were made prisoners.

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1809.
February.

Four days had been consumed in preparations for this vain attempt. It was impossible to wait till the river should have fallen so as to render the passage practicable, for the troops could not be supplied where they were, and they were beginning to suffer from inaction. Soult therefore left General Lamartiniere to command at Tuy, with 350 men, besides 900 who were on the sick list. Some public money had been found in that city, and six-and-thirty field-pieces were left there, besides some guns and ammunition which had been brought from Vigo. It was thought a position of some importance at this time, and this force sufficient to maintain it. He then marched for Orense, making this long circuit to cross the river with less unwillingness because he had received intelligence from Lahoussaye that the peasantry were in a state of insurrection in consequence of Romana's proclamations.

*Soult
marches
by way of
Orense.*

*Operations
du M. Soult,
73, 80.*

Romana indeed had not been inactive during the short respite which had been allowed him. Had the French rightly appreciated his unconquerable spirit, and apprehended the effect which such a man was capable of producing upon a brave and generous peasantry, they would have deemed his single destruction of more importance to their cause than the capture of Ferrol and Coruña. By this time he had collected some 9000 men; to form an efficient army was in his circumstances impossible, ut-

*Romana
rouses the
Galicians.*

Feb. 13.

CHAP. terly destitute as he was of means; but what was of more con-
 XIX. sequence, he had roused the country; his presence was infinitely
 1809. important there, and his name and his example hardly less so in
 February. other parts of Spain, for in every part the people were encour-
 Opinion of aged by a persuasion that their countrymen elsewhere were
 his strength more fortunate than themselves. Every where except upon the
 spot it was believed by the Spaniards that Romana was at the
 head of a formidable army; when his troops were so broken, a
 victorious enemy so close upon him, and his condition so hope-
 less in all human appearance, that he himself must have consi-
 dered his escape from captivity, and the death to which he would
 then have been condemned, as manifestly providential. The Ga-
 licians at Lisbon (in which city there were always some thousands
 of those industrious men) were at that time embodied for the
 purpose of marching to join him; and the Spanish minister
 wrote to desire that he would send officers to discipline and take
 charge of them. The dispatch found him on the Portuguese
 frontier: he represented in reply that his own force consisted
 chiefly of new volunteers, so that none of his officers could be
 spared: he could only send some who belonged to the provincial
 regiments of Tuy and Compostella. But of men there was
 no want; for even if they had been less willing to take arms
 for their country and their cause, mere desperation would have
 driven them to it. Had the French been better disposed to
 observe what for the last century at least had been the common
 humanities of war, it would not have been possible when they
 were to support themselves as they could by preying upon the
 countries which they invaded. Free licence in one thing led to
 it in all, and when resistance was provoked by the most into-
 lerable outrages, it was punished with fire and sword. The little
 towns of S. Miguel de Zequelinos and S. Christobal de Mouren-
 tan, with their adjacent hamlets, were burnt by the invaders, and

*Villages
 burnt by the
 French.*

more than 2000 persons, who were thus reduced to ruin and deprived of shelter, fled into the Portuguese territory, hoping to find refuge there.

The Portuguese General, Francisco da Silveira, had taken the command upon that frontier; his force consisted of 2800 regular troops, 2500 militia, and only fifty horse. Romana had an interview with him at Chaves, while the enemy were preparing for their vain attempt to pass the Minho; and they had resolved upon attacking the French at Tuy, when they learnt that Soult was advancing up the river. They then took up a position for the defence of Chaves, the Spaniards upon the right bank of the Tamega from Monterrey to that fortress, Silveira from the bridge of Villaça to Villarelho. The Portuguese were elated by the failure of the French in their attempt to cross the Minho, which indeed had in some degree dispirited the invaders; and Romana, though fully aware of the inefficiency of his own force, had yet an entire reliance upon the national character and the spirit which had been raised. The secular clergy as well as the monks were zealously aiding him; the monks of S. Claudio, of S. Mamed, and of S. Maria de Melon, and the parochial priest of the latter place, distinguished themselves especially in this good work. His orders were, that all should take arms who were capable of using them, and that the remaining part of the population wherever the French came should abandon their houses, and carry away all provisions.

These orders were very generally obeyed. The small parties of the French were harassed or cut off wherever they appeared; and when Soult approached Ribadavia a brave resistance was made in the village of Franzelos and before the town. The peasantry were not dispersed till great carnage had been made among them; and the invaders upon entering the town found only about a dozen persons remaining there. Detachments

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

February.

*Intended
plan of co-
operation
between Ro-
mana and
Silveira.*

Feb. 24.

*Difference
between M.
Soult and
M. Ney.*

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

*February.**Operations
de M. Soult,
92—99.**Rout of Ro-
mana's ar-
my.*

were dispatched against the peasantry on all sides, and the greater part of the artillery was sent back to Tuy, as much because of the opposition which was experienced, as owing to the state of the roads. At Orense part of the people remained, and the magistrates* submitting of necessity, came out to meet the French. Here Marshal Soult received dispatches from Ney; the contents were kept secret, but it was reported that Ney advised him not to pursue his intention of entering Portugal. The report considerably affected the superior officers, and those especially who, having belonged to Junot's army, understood the horrible sort of war in which they were again to be engaged. The two Marshals were upon ill terms with each other, and a spirit of dissension was thus introduced into the army.

After remaining more than a week at Orense, endeavouring by force to suppress the peasants, and by allurements to seduce the higher classes from their duty, Soult resumed his march for Portugal, by way of Monterrey and Chaves. In this line he expected to find a road practicable for artillery, and he thought Romana would be so effectually crushed, that he should meet with no enemy capable of molesting him in that quarter. He had sent a trumpet to that general's outposts, requesting permission for an officer to pass with a letter to the Marquis. It was granted. The letter merely contained an offer of honours and employments in the Intruder's name, if Romana would acknowledge him as King, and bring over his troops. Romana having

* The veracious historian of Marshal Soult asserts that Romana had compelled the Bishop to withdraw, knowing how much the example of his submission would influence the Galicians; as if he thought that to make a man sacrifice any thing to a sense of patriotism and of duty compulsion was necessary! and as if he were utterly ignorant of the part which that excellent Prelate sustained throughout these troubles. See vol. i. p. 319, for the character of the man who is thus traduced.

glanced at the contents, bade the bearer return, and say that the only answer to be given to such proposals was from the mouth of the cannon: but the real object of the overture was, that the officer who had been selected for this service might reconnoitre the position; and this the Spaniards, unaccustomed as they were to military precautions, gave him full opportunity of doing. On the following day General Franceschi was ordered to attack their right, which was posted to the south-east of Monterrey, on the heights of Orsona. The rout was so complete, that the actual loss did not amount to more than some 300 slain, and as many prisoners: the French considered the dispersion of the army which ensued as its destruction, and believed that Romana had fixed upon so remote a point as Asturias for the rallying place. While Franceschi was thus employed on the right, Laborde attacked the vanguard of the Portugueze at Villaca, who retired * at night, after a good resistance, losing one of their two guns.

The French had left 200 sick and wounded at Ribadavia; they had removed them to Orense, where nearly 500 were added to the number, and now the whole were ordered to Monterrey, in so insecure a state did Soult consider the country which he was leaving. The old works at Monterrey, he thought, might

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

February.

*The French
remove their
sick to Mon-
terrey.*

* Marshal Soult's historian represents this affair as of great importance, because it removed the impression which their failure in crossing the Minho had made upon the army. What is more curious, he finds in it a justification for their invasion of Portugal! *Les Portugais avaient fait trois lieues sur les terres d'Espagne pour venir attaquer l'armée Française engagée avec les Espagnols, mouvement hostile concerté avec la Romana pour faciliter sa retraite, et qui justifiait l'entrée que nous allions faire en Portugal.*—P. 106. If any thing can be more detestable than the avowed and exultant profligacy of these men during their season of triumph, it is the manner in which they have afterwards attempted to gloze over actions which public opinion (and still more the event) has made them feel are too nefarious to be openly defended.

CHAP. be so repaired as to render that place tenable, and make it serve
 XIX. as a base for his line of operations. There and in the little
 1809. town of Verin, on the opposite side of the Tamega, which con-
 February. tained about 2000 inhabitants, scarcely twenty persons had re-
 mained; and the French began to doubt the saying of Buona-
 parte, that men with bayonets could want for nothing. The
 fugitives, however, had left wine in Verin; and in order to pay
 some part of his establishment, Soult raised a few thousand
 pounds by a loan from the troops, . . . part of the money which
 had been thrown away in Sir John Moore's retreat. General
 Merle was left to collect his division there, forming the reserve,
 and the rest of the army advanced down the Tamega, to enter
 Portugal, before any effectual preparations could be made for
 resisting them. Marshal Soult was so apprehensive lest the
 troops should suffer in health, that when they crossed the river
 by a ford little more than knee deep, he erected two temporary
 bridges there for the infantry.

*Operations
 de M. Soult,
 107—111,
 115.*

Chaves. Chaves is the frontier town of Portugal on that side, as Mon-
 terrey is that of Spain; both are on the Tamega, a river which,
 rising in the Sierra de S. Mamed, and watering the fertile vales
 of Monterrey and Oimbra, enters Portugal at Chaves, turns again
 into Galicia among the mountains of Barroso, and re-entering
Tras os Montes, joins the Douro at *S. Miguel de Entre ambos os*
Rios with a stronger and larger volume of waters than is borne
 to it by any other of its tributary streams. Chaves is known to
 have been the *Aquæ Flaviæ* of the Romans, so named because of
 its hot springs, and in honour of its founder Vespasian. The
 baths, when flattery in course of nature was out of date, sup-
 planted the memory of the Emperor; and the place then ob-
 tained the more appropriate name of *Aquæ Calidæ*, which in
 process of time was abbreviated and corrupted into Chaves.
 The springs are said to be more efficacious than any other in

Portugal; but the buildings which formerly served to accom-
modate invalids who came to seek relief from these waters were
demolished by the Conde de Mesquitella, toward the close of the
seventeenth century, in order that the guns might command the
approach on that side without impediment: he has been cen-
sured for this as having committed a certain mischief for the
sake of a frivolous precaution. At that time Chaves was con-
sidered a place of importance. The walls were now in many
places fallen to decay, and though the citadel was in better repair,
both it and the town were commanded from several points, and
at short distances.

CHAP.
XIX.
1809.
March.

Whatever hopes Silveira might have entertained of opposing
the French with the assistance of Romana's army, he was fully
sensible after the rout of the Spaniards that he could neither
stand his ground in the vale, nor defend the dilapidated works
of the town with men of whom the greater number were half
armed and wholly undisciplined. On the day therefore when
the enemy entered Monterrey he gave orders for evacuating
Chaves, and withdrew to the heights of Outeiro Joam, and S.
Pedro de Agostem. Small as the regular force was which he
commanded, Portugal, he well knew, could ill afford to lose it;
opportunity for seriously annoying the invaders was likely to
occur, but to expose his men now would be vainly and wantonly
to sacrifice them. Thus he reasoned; but the spirit of insubor-
dination was abroad. The peasantry, in ignorant but honest
zeal, insisted upon defending the place, and they were supported
by certain of his officers, who were actuated some by mere pre-
sumption, others by the intention of ingratiating themselves with
the enemy, whom they thus should serve. To Chaves therefore
these persons returned, and the vanguard which, having been
stationed at Villarelho to observe the French, he had ordered to
follow him, joined with this party, and prepared to defend the

*Silveira re-
tires from
Chaves.*

March 7.

*Some mu-
tinous of-
ficers re-
solve to de-
fend it.*

*Diario Of-
ficial. Cor-
reio Bra-
ziliense,
t. iii. p. 110
—11.*

CHAP. town, in contempt of his authority. If Silveira's character had
 XIX. been any ways doubtful, or if he had been less esteemed and less
 1809. beloved by the soldiers, he must at this time have fallen a sacri-
 March. fice to popular suspicion.

*Surrender
 of Chaves.*

March 10.

Part of the enemy's advanced guard came in sight of Chaves the next day. On the following Silveira went into the town, and endeavoured, but in vain, to convince the refractory officers that it was not possible to oppose any effectual resistance. Again on the morrow he entered it, summoned all the superior officers to a council of war, and protested against the resolution which had been taken, explaining at the same time the grounds of his opinion. All the officers agreed with him except those who by aid of the populace had taken upon themselves the command. By this time the place was invested on three sides, and Soult summoned the general to surrender. Silveira returned a verbal answer, that he had nothing to do with the defence of Chaves, but only with the army which he commanded; he then retired to the Campo de S. Barbara. A letter from Marshal Soult followed him, requiring him to retain the army and govern the province in the Emperor Napoleon's name, and spare the effusion of blood which must otherwise follow. Silveira replied by word of mouth, that one who had the honour to command Portuguese could give ear to no such proposals; and that he would never listen to any except that of Marshal Soult's surrender. Meantime a fire was kept up from the place with as little effect as judgement, and the French suffered some loss from the peasantry and from small parties who were on the alert to seize every occasion. A second summons was now sent in; by this time the ardour of the refractory troops had begun to cool, and the self-elected commandant dispatched a messenger to Silveira, requesting orders. Silveira's reply was, that he who had taken upon himself to defend Chaves contrary to his orders

must act for himself. He desired, however, that the officers who were in the place might be directed to bring off the troops during the night, saying that he would cover their retreat by bringing down a greater force upon Outeiro Joam. The movement was made on his part; but he looked in vain for any attempt on the part of the garrison, and on the following morning they surrendered prisoners of war.

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

March.

Diario Off.
Cor. Braz.
112.

It was now seen what motives had influenced the promoters of this mock defence, for all the staff-officers offered their services to the Emperor Napoleon; the troops of the line followed their example, but with a very different intention, and took the first opportunity to escape. Marshal Soult could spare no force for marching off his prisoners, nor for securing them at Chaves; he therefore required an oath from the militia and peasants that they would never again bear arms against the French, and dismissed them. This conduct excited murmurs among those who would rather, after the example of their Emperor, have made sure work. If Junot had commanded the army, they said, the place would have been stormed as soon as they appeared before it. Marshal Soult was not a jot more scrupulous than his predecessor; but at this time the treasonable disposition which had been manifested by a few officers led him to suppose that it might be more easy to conciliate the Portuguese than he had found it to coerce their neighbours, and under this persuasion he established his hospital at Chaves; accordingly the sick and wounded were once more removed, and about 1400 were left there with a small force for their protection under the *chef de bataillon* Messenger. The Marshal then announced his appointment as Governor-general of Portugal, . . . the rank which Junot (whom the Portuguese called the Duke *in partibus*) had held, and proceeded on his march.

The French
establish
their hospi-
tal there.

Operations
de M. Soult,
112-124.

His effective force consisted at this time of 21,000 men, the

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

March.

*Prepara-
tions for
defence at
Porto.*

country through which he had to pass is one of the most defensible in Europe, nor would it be possible any where to find a peasantry better disposed to defend their hearths and altars, nor better able, had there been common prudence to direct their willing strength. But the military profession had fallen in Portugal to the lowest point of degradation; and governments which weaken every thing for the miserable purpose of rendering a corrupt and anile despotism secure, find themselves powerless and helpless at the first approach of danger. The Portuguese in these provinces were aware that invasion would be attempted, though they knew not on what side; and the effect was to produce tumults among the people, insubordination in the soldiers, apprehension, vacillation, and confusion among the chief officers and rulers, and a state of suspicious excitement which predisposed the public mind equally for impulses of furious cruelty or of unreasonable panic. The Bishop of Porto applied to the Regency for succours; but Lisbon at that time was itself as likely to be attacked, nor indeed had the government any troops upon whom the slightest confidence could be placed. How capable the Portuguese were of becoming good soldiers, though well understood by those who knew the people, and indeed not to be doubted by any who had any knowledge of human nature, had not yet been tried: with excellent qualities and the best disposition they were perfectly inefficient now. The Bishop had been offended with Sir Robert Wilson for having passed into Spain with a body of Portuguese troops. The consequences of Sir Robert's movement to Ciudad Rodrigo had been more important than he himself could have anticipated, and yet in leaving Porto he lost one of the fairest occasions that was ever presented to an active and enterprising spirit. Acting as he did there with the full concurrence of the Bishop, and possessing his confidence, there was time to have disciplined a force which might have im-

peded the passage of Soult's army through the strong defiles it had to pass, and have presented a resistance at Porto as successful as that of Acre, and more fatal to the enemy. The means of defence were in abundance, order and intelligence for directing them alone were wanting. The population of the city may be estimated at 80,000, and there were 2000 troops of the line there, 3000 militia, and 15,000 *ordenanças*; the latter half armed, and the greater part without discipline. A line of batteries was erected round the city and suburbs, extending from the Castle of Queijo on the coast to the village of Freixo on the Douro; the line was about three miles in extent, and between two and three hundred pieces of artillery were mounted there in thirty-five batteries. Had it been well constructed, a large force would have been necessary to defend it: but there had been as little skill in the formation as in the plan; the batteries were without parapets, and the houses and trees which might afford cover to an enemy were not taken down.

CHAP.
XIX.
1809.
March.

Soult meantime, as soon as he had entered Chaves, thought to cut off Silveira; but that general frustrated his intent by retiring first to the mountains of Oura and Reigaz, and then to Villa Pouca, where he took a position with the determination of defending it. The French, however, did not think this little force of sufficient consequence to delay their march; and sending out parties in different directions, in the hope that the report of their entrance spreading on all sides, might reach the Generals who were to co-operate with them, but with whom they had no means of communicating, they proceeded by the Braga road. The resistance which they found evinced the brave spirit of the people, and the incapacity of those who commanded them. The villages were abandoned, stragglers were cut off, they were fired upon by the peasantry from the heights and the cover of crags or trees; any military attempt to impede them was conducted

*Advance of
the French
from
Chaves.*

March 13.

CHAP. with so little skill or order, that it served only to confirm their
 XIX. contempt for the nation upon whom they had brought and were
 1809. about to bring such unutterable miseries; but sometimes a hand-
March. ful of Portugeze stood their ground with a spirit like that of
 their ancestors; and sometimes an individual would rush upon
 certain death, so he could make sure of one Frenchman, know-
 ing that if his countrymen would act upon the same principle of
 life for life, the kingdom would soon be delivered from its un-
 provoked invaders.

*Operations
 de M. Soult,
 128.*

*Tumults at
 Braga.*

*Dialogo en-
 tre Braga e
 o Porto,
 19 - 21.*

March 15.

Bernardim Freire, not knowing whether the enemy would take the way by Braga or by Villa-real, had given orders to secure the positions of Ponte de Cavez and Salto on the latter road, Ruivaens and Salamonde on the other: his head-quarters were at Braga, a city which had long been in a state of strange confusion. The clergy with whimsical indecorum had embodied themselves to serve as a guard of honour for the Primate till their services should be needed for the defence of the place; and part of the exercise of this ecclesiastical corps was with one hand to take off the hat at the Ave Maria bell, and present arms with the other. Men lose their proper influence when they go out of their proper sphere; and the extraordinary circumstances which justified the clergy in taking arms, and even increased their authority while they acted individually either in the ranks or in command, did not save them from ridicule when they thus exposed themselves to it as a body. At any time this would have been an evil; it was especially so when the bonds of authority had been loosened, and envy, cupidity, and hatred were under no restraint. General Freire had neither the talents nor the character to command respect; and on his return from inspecting the positions at Ruivaens and Salamonde he had been insulted and menaced by the rabble at S. Gens. On the following day, having received intelligence that the enemy were on the

way to Ruivaens, he went to the heights of Carvalho d'Este, with the intention of occupying a strong position there, not indeed in any expectation of defeating the enemy, for having just military knowledge enough to see all the difficulties of his situation, he knew himself and the men under his command too well to entertain any hope; but time he thought might be gained for removing the stores from Braga, and whatever else could be saved. It was soon understood that the pass of Ruivaens had been forced, and this intelligence was presently followed by the fearful tidings that the French had won the defiles of Salamonde also. His only thought now was of retiring upon Porto; and having dispatched in the night an order written in pencil to his adjutant-general for removing the military chest from Braga, and advising Parreiras, who commanded at Porto, of the enemy's approach, he entered the city in the morning, and found it in a state of complete anarchy. His dispatches had been seized and opened by the mob, and some of his messengers murdered. Conceiving that his only course now was to provide for the defence of Porto, he gave orders accordingly. The populace were of a different opinion; they thought the position at Carvalho d'Este ought to be defended, and considered it either an act of cowardice or of treason to let the French advance without resistance. Freire, however, left the city without receiving any injury, and took the high road to Porto. At the village of Carapoa the peasants detained him as a traitor; he was rescued by the timely arrival of a commandant of brigade, and proceeded with a guard of twenty men for his protection; but falling in presently with a party of *ordenanças*, they seized him, and insisted upon taking him back to Braga.

Meantime the peasantry from all sides had flocked to that city, some retreating before the French, some hastening to meet them; some armed with pikes, those who had fowling-pieces

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

March.

March 17.

Sentença
sobre as
Atrocida-
des, &c.
Corr. Braz.
iv. 521—
531.General
Freire
murdered.

CHAP. looking for ammunition, all demanding to be embodied and led
XIX. out against the enemy. At this juncture Baron d'Eben arrived
1809. on his retreat, in obedience to the General's instructions. This
March. Hanoverian nobleman, who was then a major in the British
service, and equerry to the Prince of Wales, commanded the
second battalion of the Lusitanian legion, and after Sir Robert
Wilson's departure for the frontier had continued to train his
men with a diligence and success which won the confidence of
the people. The populace crowded round him, seized the reins
of his horse, exclaimed that they were determined to defend the
city, reviled the General for not leading them against the invaders,
and insisted upon his taking the command. Baron d'Eben pro-
mised to assist their patriotic exertions in the best manner he
could, but said it was necessary that he should first speak with
the General. By thus complying with their wishes he hoped to
obtain an ascendancy which might enable him to prevent ex-
cesses; and for the moment he seemed to have succeeded, for
they allowed him to leave the city for that purpose with an escort
of an hundred *ordenanças*. They had not proceeded far before
they met Freire on foot between two ruffians, who held him by
the arms, and followed by a ferocious mob, who threatened to
fire upon D'Eben when he attempted to interfere. Yielding to
a rabble whom he was unable to oppose, he turned his horse
toward Braga; the rabble then cheered him, and when he reached
the house where his quarters were, thither the unfortunate Ge-
neral was brought. Freire called upon him for protection; but
when the Baron endeavoured to lead him into the house, one of
the infuriated multitude thrust at the General with a sword, and
wounded him slightly under D'Eben's arm. He got, however,
within the door, and D'Eben hoping to save him by employing
the people, went out and ordered the drum to beat, and the
ordenanças to form in line. The mob continued to fire upon the

house where Freire was sheltered ; and D'Eben then, as the only means of saving him, proposed that he should be put in prison. This was done : and seeing him as he thought safe there, he yielded to the clamours of the people, who required to be led against the enemy. Accordingly he formed them in such order as he could, and set out. Presently a firing was heard in the city, and he was informed that the rabble had dragged out the General from the prison, and murdered him with circumstances of atrocious cruelty. Men, like wild beasts, when once they have tasted blood, acquire an appetite for it. The cry of treason, while it served as a pretext for old enmities and private designs, deceived the ignorant and inflamed the furious ; and several persons of rank, as well as many of Freire's officers, were butchered in the city and in the neighbouring villages.

The command was now a second time forced upon Baron d'Eben by acclamation, and to him the papers of the murdered General were brought. He sealed them up, dispatched them to Porto, and prepared as well as he could to put his tumultuary force in order. The bells from all the churches were ringing the alarm, and the *ordenanças* were coming in at the call : no preparation had been made for supplying them with food when they were ordered to their stations, nor were there any cartridges which would fit their pieces. A single mould was at length found of the just size, lead was taken from the churches, and bullets were made during the night as fast as this slow process would allow. Meanwhile the French vanguard under Generals Franceschi and Laborde, with the brigade of General Foy, arrived before the position of Carvalho, which a part of this tumultuary force had occupied, about five miles in front of Braga. During three days frequent attacks were made, and the Portuguese kept their ground. By this time the other divisions of the French had come up, and D'Eben had collected about 23,000

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

March.*The Portuguese
routed before
Braga.**March 20.*

CHAP. men; 2000 consisted of regular troops, the legion and the
 XIX. Braga militia; of the remainder only 5000 were armed with fire-
 1809. arms, and most of these had only three rounds of ammunition.
March. Such a multitude was little able to withstand the well-concerted
 and well-sustained attack of a disciplined force nearly equal in
 numbers. They were presently routed, and the French having
 found one of their fellow-soldiers horribly mutilated by some
 ferocious persons into whose hands he had fallen, showed little
 mercy in the pursuit. D'Eben and some of his officers at-
 tempted in vain to rally the fugitives, that they might defend
 the city; the answer to all his exhortations was, that there was
 no ammunition. The last act of the rabble was to murder those
 remaining objects of their suspicion whom D'Eben had hoped
 to save by putting them in prison.

*Operations
 de M. Soult,
 142.*

*The French
 enter Braga*

The French might impose upon the world by representing
 the dispersion of this tumultuous assemblage as a splendid vic-
 tory; but they could not deceive themselves concerning the
 temper of the nation, when upon entering the city they found it
 deserted by all its inhabitants, and stripped of every thing which
 could be carried away. If their light vanity could be elated
 with the vaunt that in the course of eleven days they had won
 many battles, taken two towns, and forced the passage of a chain
 of mountains, there was enough to abate their pleasure, if not
 their pride, in the fact that empty houses were all that they had
 gained; that they were masters of no more country than their
 troops could cover, and only while they covered it; and in the
 ominous apprehension excited by knowing how deeply and how
 deservedly they were hated by the people whom they had invaded.
 They consoled themselves with the thought that the rich mer-
 chants of Porto would not abandon their property as the people
 of Braga had done their dwellings; and Marshal Soult was not
 sparing of professions, that it was with regret he had been com-

pelled to employ force, when his only object in entering Portugal was to deliver that fine country from the ruinous yoke of the English, the eternal enemies of her prosperity. Some of the inhabitants were induced to return, and one was found timid or traitorous enough to take upon himself the office of Corregidor by Marshal Soult's appointment. The most important business which this wretched instrument of the enemy was called upon to perform was to provide them with food; for which purpose he was instructed to assure his countrymen that if they did not bring in provisions, the French would take them; that in that case the officers could not control the men; it would therefore be for their own interest to act as they were required to do, and for all which they supplied they should receive receipts, payable in a manner afterwards to be explained.

After resting his army three days, and leaving 700 sick and wounded in the hospitals, Soult proceeded on his march. One division, which found the bridge over the Ave at Barca da Trofa broken down, and the ford guarded too well to be passed without loss and difficulty, succeeded in winning and repairing the Ponte de S. Justo over the same river, higher up. The Ponte de Ave also was forced by Colonel Lallemand in a second attempt; and the officers who defended it were murdered by their men, who, feeling in themselves no want of courage or of will, imputed every reverse to treachery in their leaders. Without farther opposition the enemy advanced upon Porto, and the Marshal sent in a summons to the Bishop, the magistrates, and the General, in the usual French style, protesting that the French came not as enemies to the Portuguese, but only to drive away the English; and that the rulers of the city would be responsible before God and man for the blood that would be shed, and the horrors which must ensue, if they attempted to oppose an army accustomed to victory. It was not without danger that the summons could be

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.
March.

*Operations,
&c. 146—8.*

*They appear before
Porto.
March 24.*

March 28.

CHAP. delivered; and General Foy, who either being deceived by the
 XIX. gestures of a party of soldiers, or mistaking them, advanced to
 1809. receive their submission, was surrounded and carried into the
 March. city. A cry was set up that they had taken Loison; and Foy
 would have been torn to pieces, in vengeance for Loison's crimes,
 if he had not possessed presence of mind enough to lift up both
 hands, and thus prove to the people that he was not their old
 one-armed enemy.

*Operations,
 &c. 159—
 168.*

*Oliveira
 murdered.*

*Vol. i. p.
 447.*

*The bishop
 leaves the
 city.*

The persons in authority had sufficient influence to save his life, and put him in confinement for security; but they were unable to protect Luiz de Oliveira, who having been deservedly thrown into prison in June, had been left there as if forgotten, with that iniquitous neglect of justice which had long been usual in Portugal. He was murdered and dragged through the streets by the rabble; and a few other victims perished in this last explosion of popular fury. The Bishop, who appears to have been at that time in the battery of S. Francisco encouraging the troops, saw now what had been represented to him vainly, though in time, that the works were too extensive, as well as too weak. He had been advised to strengthen them by throwing up works *en flèche*, to place 1500 of the best troops in their rear, as a reserve for supporting the point which should be attacked, and to throw up a second line close under the suburb, and have the houses loop-holed, in preparation for that sort of defence which the inhabitants were in a temper to have maintained, had there been spirits to have directed them, as at Zaragoza. None of these things had been done; and the Bishop, sensible when too late of the errors which had been committed, and the value of the time which had been lost, and perceiving also too many proofs of that confusion which insubordination always produces, crossed to the left bank of the Douro during the night, leaving the ill-planned and ill-constructed works to be defended by an inade-

quate force and an inefficient general. All night the bells of all the churches were ringing the alarm; the churches were filled with supplicants, the streets with a multitude, who wasted in furious demonstrations that strength which should have been reserved for the defence of their streets, and houses, and chambers. At midnight a storm of wind and rain and thunder broke over the city, and while the lightnings flashed above, a useless discharge of cannon and musketry was kept up by the Portugueze along the line, at which the enemy gazed as at a spectacle, for not a shot could reach them. Soult had given orders that the works should be attacked at six on the ensuing morning, which was Good Friday. Napoleon and Glory was the word. The storm ceased about three, and the attack was postponed till seven, that the soil might have time to dry, so as not to impede the troops in their movements.

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Operations,
&c. 168-9.

General Parreiras before the attack was made had lost all hope of opposing a successful resistance. Yet when the enemy attacked the Prelada, a *quinta*, or country-seat, about a mile from the city, where the lines formed an angle, they did not force it without a loss of 500 men, including two *chefs de bataillon*. Having forced it, they flanked the greater part of those troops who did their duty. The right and left were attacked also; a panic soon spread: in less than an hour after the commencement of the action, the General, seeing that all was lost, had crossed the bridge, and the French were in the town. A tremendous carnage ensued: the cavalry charging through the streets, and slaughtering indiscriminately all whom they overtook: for an officer who accompanied General Foy the preceding day had been killed, having attempted to defend himself when the General surrendered, and the circumstance of his death was made a pretext for this butchery. But the greatest destruction took place in the passage of the river; the inhabitants rushed to the bridge of

Porto taken

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boats in such numbers, that the first pontoon sank under their weight; the crowd from behind still pressed on, forcing those who were foremost into the stream, and themselves in like manner precipitated in their turn; the French meantime keeping up a fire of grape-shot upon the affrighted and helpless fugitives. From three to four thousand persons are supposed to have perished thus; and not satisfied with this, the enemy kept up a fire from the most commanding points upon those who were endeavouring to cross in boats. Of the numbers who were thus killed a large proportion consisted of women and children. But in this miserable day neither sex, age, nor innocence could obtain mercy, nor manly and heroic courage command respect from the inhuman enemy. The men, and they were not few, who did their duty, singly or in small parties where a handful of brave Portuguese had got together, were put to the sword. About two hundred, whom the French praised in reality when they intended to depreciate them by calling them the most fanaticised, collected near the Cathedral, and fought till the last man was cut down. The scenes which ensued were more odious and more opprobrious to humanity than even the horrors of this carnage; the men, however, were not allowed to commit enormities of every kind till they were glutted; as they had been at Evora. Marshal Soult exerted himself to check their* excesses with an earnestness

Col. Jones's
Acc. of the
War, i. 195.

* Marshal Soult's historian expresses himself upon this subject in a manner altogether worthy of such a writer: "*Le Français, si passionné pour la beauté, sacrifia ses plaisirs à l'honneur de protéger les femmes qui réclamèrent son appui.*"

I believe that no other portion of history was ever so entirely and audaciously falsified as that of the peninsular war has been by the French. This writer asserts that few days have been so brilliant for the French arms as that on which Porto was taken; that they were astonished at their own success when they saw how many obstacles they had overcome; for that *des officiers du génie Portugais et Anglais s'étaient occupés à réunir à l'avantage de la position, tout ce que l'art a inventé pour la défense*

which, even if it proceeded from mere motives of policy, must be recorded to his honour. And he had some officers to second him with true good will in this good work; for though the miscreants were with him who had disgraced their country and their profession by the atrocities which they had perpetrated or permitted at Evora and Leiria, there were others who abhorred the iniquitous service in which they were engaged, and who were members of a secret society, the object of which was to throw off Buonaparte's yoke, and restore peace to France and Europe.

Complete as his success had hitherto been, and little as it had cost him, Marshal Soult did not find it advisable to push on for Lisbon. He now knew what was the spirit of the nation, and he was without any intelligence from Lapisse and Victor, whose movements were to be combined with his. He applied himself therefore to securing what he had won, and endeavoured to conciliate the Portuguese, and raise a party among them in favour of the ambitious designs which, like Junot, he appears now to have formed. For this purpose a newspaper was published at

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Soult re-
mains at
Porto.

d'un camp; and that these formidable works were manned by 70,000 men determined to defend them to the last extremity. Pp. 159—60—77.

There is another statement of this writer's which deserves notice. He says that the former campaign in Portugal had been distinguished by cruelties on the part of the inhabitants (p. 56); and that in the present "*pour animer le peuple contre les Français, on avait répandu les bruits les plus absurdes. La haine les peignait aux yeux de la superstition et de la crédulité, comme des hérétiques qui foulaient aux pieds tous les principes religieux, comme des barbares qui au mépris des lois divines et humaines, dévoraient les enfans, livraient le sexe à tous les outrages, et envoyaient les hommes dans le nord pour renforcer leurs armées.*"—(P. 119.) The charges against which this contemptuous indignation is affected are true to the very letter, with the exception of that of eating the children, which, be it remembered, was never made. They did not eat children; . . . they only butchered them sometimes, and sometimes (as will be shown hereafter) let them die of hunger before their eyes.

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Porto a week only after its capture, and the first number opened with a panegyric upon the conqueror because he had not totally destroyed the city. While the streets were yet stained with the blood of the carnage, and there was mourning in every house, and bodies were every day cast up by the river and along the sea-beach, . . while it was stated officially in the Madrid Gazette that the whole garrison had been put to the sword, . . Marshal Soult was panegyricized for clemency ! The dreadful catastrophe which Porto had suffered, said his writers, might serve as a warning for all who undertook great enterprises without calculating the means, or looking on to the end. But amid the horror with which so severe an example affected every feeling heart, there was abundant matter of consolation for minds capable of weighing things in the balance of philosophy. Towns carried by assault had invariably, among the most civilized nations, paid with their total destruction the penalty of their contumacy. This was the fate which Porto had had to apprehend ; and from this it had been spared by a hero who always listened to the voice of mercy, and in whose heart valour and humanity contended for the ascendance !

*Disposition
of the inha-
bitants.*

*Operations,
&c. 183.*

Do. 206.

The Portuguese are not so light a people as to be thus easily deceived. They had seen the tender mercies of the French too recently to be duped by their professions, and not more than a sixth part of the inhabitants remained in Porto under their government. If this proof of their disposition augured ill for the French, it lessened the difficulty of providing for the city, which was an object of no small anxiety to the captors. They who had undertaken to supply the troops went into the country by night to make their bargains with persons whom they could trust, and the supplies were brought in darkness at a stated hour to a stated place ; for if any person had been seen engaged in thus administering to the enemy, his life would have been the penalty of

his treason. When the English property was put up to sale, not a person would bid for it: an individual at last ventured to offer about a third part of its value for certain goods, but before four-and-twenty hours had elapsed he absconded, either for the fear of being marked as one who had dealt with the French, or unable to bear the shame of having been the only Portuguese in Porto who had thus disgraced himself.

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*Operations,
&c. 205.*

There were, however, in Portugal, as in every country, men who have no other principle than the determination of promoting their own interest by any means; and there were some few who entertained that abject and superstitious faith in Buonaparte's fortune which his partizans and flatterers every where endeavoured to promote. Some also there were who, in their vehement abhorrence for the besotted despotism and the filthy superstition which degraded their country, had renounced their national feeling and their Christian faith. The scheme of Soult's policy was to make such persons (whom he supposed more numerous than they were) stand forward as a party, engage them in the irremissible offence of swearing fidelity to Napoleon and obedience to his representative, and employ them in corrupting their countrymen, and in watching and subjugating those whom they could not seduce. For this purpose he had his emissaries in the capital and in the provinces to spread disaffection by representing the abuses and evils both of the civil and ecclesiastical system, . . . abuses which it was hardly possible to exaggerate, and evils which in themselves and in their consequences were only more tolerable and less pernicious than the iron tyranny which Buonaparte would have substituted in their place. Marshal Soult had also conceived the strange intention of making the Jews, whose number in Portugal he estimated at 200,000, avow their religion under the protection of France, and hold upon an appointed day a general feast for the success

*Marshal
Soult's
views re-
specting the
Liberals
and the
Jews.*

*Campaign
of 1809 in
the Penin-
sula, 15.
Do. Appen-
dix A.*

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of the Emperor's arms. It is probable that he overrated them as greatly as he mistook their character; but if they had been mad enough to act in conformity to his wishes, a general massacre would have been the certain consequence. For the old inhuman prejudice against this persecuted race, when yielding to wiser laws and the spirit of the age, had been revived by the manner in which Buonaparte courted them. It was observed by some of the Spanish journalists, that when the Turks were the terror of Christendom, they had derived their information from the Jews, who were their instruments every where; and the promise of Buonaparte to abolish the Inquisition provoked only from the Spaniards the remark that this measure must have been suggested by some Israelite of the Sanhedrim.

*His hopes
of becoming
King of
Northern
Lusitania.*

Among the Portugeze who, from the perversion of good feelings, or the original prevalence of base ones, were open to corruption, persons were found to forward the design which Soult had now formed of becoming King of Northern Lusitania. Buonaparte's formation of new principalities and kingdoms for his brothers and favourites had made the generals of this new Alexander suppose that his conquests would be divided among them, and a petty kingdom under this title had been carved out in the secret treaty of Fontainebleau. A deputation of twelve principal inhabitants of Braga, as they were represented to be, waited upon the Marshal, and published in his gazette an account of their interview with him, and an address in consequence to the Portugeze people. They assured their countrymen that Marshal Soult had conversed with them at great length upon the produce, commerce, and interests of the province between the rivers, in a manner which formed a striking contrast to the conduct of their old government. That government, they said, had been indifferent about all things except the raising of its revenues. The flight of the Prince Regent amounted to a voluntary

abdication of the throne, and a happy futurity might now be anticipated under a better dynasty. The House of Braganza, said these traitors, no longer exists. It is the will of Heaven that our destinies should pass into other hands; and it has been the peculiar favour of Divine Providence to send us a man exempt from passions, and devoted to true glory alone, who desires to employ the force entrusted to him by the great Napoleon only for our protection and deliverance from the monster of anarchy which threatened to devour us. Why do we delay to assemble round him, and proclaim him our father and deliverer? Why do we delay to express our anxiety to see him at the head of a nation, of whose affections he has made so rapid a conquest? The sovereign of France will lend a gracious ear to our supplications, and will rejoice to see that we desire one of his lieutenants for our King, who, in imitation of his example, knows how to conquer and to pardon.

Such an address could not have been published in a journal which was under French superintendence unless it had been in unison with Soult's designs. On another occasion, when he gave audience to a second deputation from Braga, and to the civil, religious, and military authorities of Porto, the obsequious traitors requested that till the supreme intentions of the Emperor should be ascertained they might be allowed to swear fidelity to his most worthy representative, who had so many claims upon the love, respect, and gratitude of the Portuguese. The Marshal expatiated as usual in reply upon the felicities which were about to be showered upon Portugal under a French master: "As to what concerns myself," he added, "I feel obliged by the frank expressions which you have used relating to my person; but it does not depend upon me to answer them." He had, however, depended so much upon realizing this dream of ambition, that proclamations were prepared, announcing him as King. It was

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CHAP. fortunate for the parties concerned that they went no farther; for
 XIX. one of his staff, who was supposed to be a principal agent in the
 1809. scheme, was recalled to Paris, and Buonaparte, addressing him
 April. by name at a grand levee, said to him, "Take care how you draw
 Col. Jones's up proclamations! My empire is not yet sufficiently extended
 Hist. of the War, i. 199, for my generals to become independent. One step farther, and
 note. I would have had you shot."

*He visits
 the church
 of N. Sen-
 hor de Bou-
 ças.*

*D. Rodrigo
 da Cunha,
 Cat. dos
 Bispos do
 Porto, pp.
 393, 4.*

Expecting no such impediment to his hopes, the "worthy representative" of Buonaparte proceeded, as his master had done in Egypt, to show his attachment to the religion of the people whom he came to govern. There is a famous crucifix, known by the name of Nosso Senhor de Bouças, in the little town of Matosinhos, upon the coast, about a league from Porto. According to tradition it is the oldest image in Portugal, being the work of Nicodemus; and though the workman neither attempted to represent muscle nor vein, it is affirmed that there cannot be a more perfect and excellent crucifix. Antiquaries discovered another merit in it, for there has been a controversy concerning the number* of nails used in the crucifixion, and in this image four are represented, agreeing with the opinion of St. Gregory of Tours, and the revelation made to the Swedish St. Bridget. The sea cast it up, and its miraculous virtue was soon attested by innumerable proofs. One of the arms was wanting when it was found; the best sculptors were employed to supply this deficiency; but in spite of all their skill not one of them could produce an arm which would fit the place for which it was

* The matter is of more importance than may be immediately perceived by a protestant. For more than three of these nails are shown as relics in different churches; and, therefore, if only three, according to the prevailing opinion, were used, the fourth must be spurious, and thus, as all cannot be genuine, a doubt would be cast upon the authenticity of each.

designed. One day a poor but pious woman, as she was gathering shell-fish and drift-wood for fuel, picked up upon the beach a wooden arm, which she, supposing that it had belonged to some ordinary and profane image, laid upon the fire. The reader will be at no loss to imagine that it sprung out of the flames, . . . that the neighbours collected at the vociferations of the woman, . . . that the priests were ready to carry it in procession to the church of N. Senhor; and that the moment it was applied to the stump whereto it belonged, a miraculous junction was effected. Our Lord of Bouças became from that time one of the most famous idols in Portugal; and on the day of his festival five-and-twenty thousand persons have sometimes been assembled at his church, coming thither in pilgrimage from all parts.

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*Corografia
Portuguesa,
t. i. 361.*

To this idol Marshal Soult thought proper to offer his devotions. He and his staff visited the church, and prostrating themselves before the altar, paid, says his journal, that tribute of respect and reverence which religion requires from those who are animated with the true spirit of Christianity. "There cannot," continued the hypocritical traitor who recorded this mummary, . . . "there cannot be a more affecting and interesting spectacle, than to see a Great Man humbling himself in the presence of the King of kings and Sovereign Disposer of empires. All the inhabitants of Matosinhos who were present at this religious solemnity were wrapt in ecstasy!" The French Marshal testified his great concern at hearing that the plate and jewels and ornaments of the church had been carried off; and he promised the rector that he would offer two large silver candlesticks to Nosso Senhor, and dedicate a silver lamp to him, and assign funds to keep it burning night and day, and, moreover, that he would double the stipend of the rector and the sacristan. "Let this fact," said his penman, "be contrasted with what we have been told respecting the irreligion of the French troops and

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their leaders! It is time to open our eyes, and to acknowledge the hand of Providence in the events which have befallen us. How fortunate are we that Heaven has destined us to be governed by a hero who possesses a heart disposed to be deeply and warmly impressed with the majesty of our holy religion, and who aspires only to make it shine forth with new and never-fading splendour! Let the calumniators be confounded, and the timid be tranquil! Our hopes ought to be re-animated now that they have obtained a support, which, resting on religion, and lifting its head above the storms, promises them entire realization."

Not a word of restoring the spoils of the church had been said by Marshal Soult;... his promise of the lamp and the funds for the oil, and the increase of salaries, was confirmed by a decree in which he dedicated the lamp, assigned a revenue of sixteen milreas for its support, and doubled the incomes; as far as the decree went he performed his promise... and no farther. His situation, indeed, was becoming too perilous to allow him time for the farce of superstition. On one hand the events in Galicia alarmed him,... on the other he learnt that the English, instead of evacuating Lisbon, were expecting a fresh army there; and that General Beresford was already arrived, with the title of Field-marshal conferred upon him by the Prince of Brazil, to take the command of the Portuguese army, and reorganize it. He had experienced the courage and the patriotism of the Portuguese, and knew that discipline was all they wanted to make them as formidable in the field as their forefathers. From the centre of Spain he could expect little assistance, so rapidly had the Spaniards re-formed their armies;... and from France itself no reinforcements were to be looked for, for Buonaparte was even obliged to withdraw troops from the Peninsula, that he might march against the Austrians.

The first ill news which reached him was from Chaves. Bernardim Freire had directed Silveira, as soon as the enemy should enter Portugal, to retire by the passes of Salamonde and Ruyvaens, and so join the main force assembled for the defence of Portugal. The spirit of insubordination which broke out at Chaves seems to have frustrated this purpose. Silveira waited till the last in the vicinity of that place, hoping to bring off the garrison when they should feel that it was untenable: failing in that hope, he found it necessary to fall back before the French in a different direction to Villa Pouca. The enemy, believing that his little army was what they called demoralized, had contented themselves with making a strong reconnoissance there under General Lorges, for the double motive of deceiving the Portuguese with regard to their intended march, and intimidating the country; then pursued their way, holding the force which they left behind them in as much contempt as that which they advanced to attack. But no sooner had Silveira ascertained their movements than he returned to his position at S. Barbara; and when the last party of the enemy's cavalry had withdrawn from observing him to follow the main body, he entered Chaves, easily overcoming the little resistance which the garrison were able to make. Messenger, the commandant, withdrew into the fort, where the Portuguese, having no artillery, blockaded him for four days: on the fifth they prepared to take it by escalade; the French then proposed to capitulate, on condition of marching out with arms and baggage to join Marshal Soult. Five minutes were allowed them to determine whether they would surrender prisoners at war, and they were glad to secure their lives by submitting to that condition. About 1300 men were thus taken, and 114 Spaniards whom Soult had left there as prisoners were restored to liberty. Silveira then followed the steps of the enemy. Hearing that they had entered Braga, his

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*March.**Chaves re-
taken by
Silveira.**March 20.*

CHAP. intention was to cut off their garrison there, as he had done at
 XIX. Chaves; but while he was arranging measures for this, he learned
 1809. the fate of Porto, and marched in consequence toward Villa
March. Real. On the way he was informed that the enemy intended to
 enter Tras os Montes by way either of Canavezes or of a little
 town known by the awkward name of *Entre ambos os rios*, from
 its position near the point where the Tamega falls into the
 Douro. Immediately he occupied both places, repulsed the
 French in two attempts upon the former, and reaching Ama-
 rante himself just as a party of the enemy, having burnt the vil-
 lages of Villa Meam, Manhufe, and Pildre, were advancing to
 take possession of it, he made them retire to Penafiel, and en-
 tered that city the next day on their withdrawing from it.

*Diario Of-
 ficial. Corr.
 Braz. iii.
 113, 115.*

*Proceedings
 at Coimbra.*

*Operations,
 &c. p. 199.*

Silveira's activity raised the hopes of the Portuguese: it was
 said in Porto that he would soon take his coffee in that city, and
 this was repeated to Soult, who desired Silveira might be assured
 that he would provide him with sugar for it. The jest is said to
 have kept up the spirits of those Portuguese who had consented
 to serve the French interest. But the cup which they had pre-
 pared for themselves was one which, drug it as they might, no-
 thing could sweeten. Every sacrifice and every success on the
 part of their countrymen, every act of heroism and virtue, every
 manifestation of the old national spirit, was a reproach to them;
 and tidings which would have elated and rejoiced their hearts if
 they had not fallen from their duty, brought to them feelings
 only of fear, and shame, and self-condemnation. The Portu-
 gueze were so persuaded of their own strength, and the ex-
 perience even of the preceding year had so little abated that
 persuasion, that they had considered it impossible for the French
 to enter Porto, or had expected at least that the city would have
 made a long and glorious resistance. And yet the tidings of
 its capture, with all the shameful and all the dreadful circum-

stances that attended it, occasioned no consternation. That miserable event was known at Coimbra on the following day; it was known also that no means had been taken for removing the boats and destroying the bridge; that the part which had been broken by the crowd of fugitives had speedily been repaired by the enemy, and that their advanced parties had proceeded as far as Grijo. It was considered certain that they would lose no time in occupying so important a city as Coimbra and the intermediate country, one of the finest and most fertile parts of the kingdom. Colonel Trant, who commanded there, knew how inadequate his means were to prevent this; but he knew that efficient aid might soon be expected from England, that much might sometimes be done by mere display, and by the judicious use of a scanty force, and that if the evil could be but for a little while delayed, it might ultimately be averted.

The force at his disposal consisted of the Coimbra militia and a detachment of volunteers who had enlisted for the army, in all 500 men; but to these an academical corps of 300 was immediately added, the students offering themselves with that alacrity, and displaying that promptitude and intelligence, which belong to youth in their station. The people began to recover confidence when they knew that one party from this little force took the road to Aveiro and another that to Sardam, the two directions in which Coimbra might be approached from Porto. Report magnified the designs of Colonel Trant and the means which he possessed; and the double good was produced of encouraging the Portuguese and delaying the progress of the French, who, if they advanced to Coimbra, would have commanded the resources of a fertile country, have approached nearer to the armies with which their operations were to be combined for effecting the conquest of the kingdom; and moreover, in case of failure, would have had an easier retreat open

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CHAP. through Beira. A most timely supply was obtained from the
XIX. magistrates of Aveiro, who having consulted the Camara of
1809. Coimbra, placed the public money which had been collected in
March. their city at Colonel Trant's disposal, and also a considerable
magazine of maize and other grain, . . both being thus secured
from the enemy, into whose hands they must otherwise have
fallen, if even a slight detachment had been sent thither. The
fugitives from Porto and from that part of the country which the
invaders occupied found in Coimbra all the assistance that could
be afforded, and were thus prevented from carrying the panic
farther ; and the soldiers who had escaped the butchery were
refitted and re-embodied as they came in. Colonel Trant of-
fered the command to Baron d'Eben ; but the Baron knew by
experience what it was to command a hasty and tumultuous
force, and chose rather to employ himself in re-collecting his
battalion of the Lusitanian Legion. It was offered also to the
Portuguese Brigadier Antonio Marcellino da Victoria ; but he
had witnessed the fate of Freire, and desired to accompany
Trant as a simple volunteer. In addition to the force which was
thus augmenting, two squadrons of regular troops unexpectedly
arrived in Coimbra, with their commander, the Visconde de
Barbacena : they had been ordered in a different direction ; but
being mostly natives of the Campo de Coimbra, they had in-
sisted upon going to defend their own immediate country, and
the Viscount deemed it better to obey their inclinations than
withstand a spirit of insubordination to which he might too pro-
bably have fallen a sacrifice. Colonel Trant removed them as
soon as possible out of the city, and separating them from the
other troops, stationed them in advance at Mealhada. The
Commander-in-chief being duly apprized of what had occurred,
gave orders that these troops should remain under his com-
mand ; and the men, whose intentions had been good when

their conduct was most irregular, were thus brought again into the line of duty.

With this motley force, a week after the capture of Porto had been known, Colonel Trant set forth. Taking the students' corps under his own command, he advanced toward Aveiro, and effected the important purpose of securing the boats and provisions in that port. The right column, under Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell (who had escaped from the carnage at Porto), he sent to the bridge of Vouga. That river (the Vacca of the ancients) rises in the Serra de Alcoba, and having received the Portuguese Agueda, which brings an equal volume of waters, enters the Lake of Aveiro, and forms a harbour there not less beautiful than singular: it is separated from the sea by two long wings of sand, and if the entrance were but good, would be perhaps the most commodious and capacious in Europe. A party of the enemy had crossed by the bridge of Vouga, and recrossed by that of Marnel, leaving in all the intermediate places the accustomed marks of their sacrilegious barbarity. They were part of a considerable cavalry force, under General Franceschi. For having taken Porto, and being masters of the Douro, the French, accustomed to consider military posts and the course of rivers as every thing, and the people as nothing in the scale, held that the country as far as the Mondego was already theirs by right of conquest; and Franceschi's division would have advanced to occupy Coimbra if he had not thought that the force opposed to him was respectable both in numbers and quality. Its number, which the enemy supposed to be from ten to twelve thousand, did not in reality exceed 2000, even after two companies of grenadiers had joined them from Guarda. They had been stationed there under Camp-Marshal Manoel Pinto Bacellar's command; but choosing to act upon their own judgement in those days of general insubordination, they compelled their officers to conduct

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1809.

April.

*Col. Trant
takes a po-
sition upon
the Vouga.
April 6.*

CHAP. XIX. them to the Vouga, as the place where they might soonest be enabled to act against the invaders of their country. With regard to the quality of this little force, the French supposed that there were English troops with it, and a great proportion of English officers. A panic seized Campbell's men; they fled towards Coimbra; some of the fugitives joined Trant, and added in no slight degree to the anxieties of his situation by the alarm which they communicated. The academical corps indeed, under his immediate command, was one in which he placed just confidence; but the fatal consequence of exposing the flower of a nobility and gentry like ordinary lives had been severely felt in England during the Great Rebellion; and the Portuguese remembered an example still more ruinous of the same prodigality, when with their King Sebastian they lost every thing except their honour. He addressed them therefore on this occasion; told them they would have to contend against superior numbers, and hinted at the reproaches which he might bring upon himself if he should lead so large a portion of the illustrious youth of Portugal to destruction. The address produced the animating effect for which it was intended, and they answered him with a general exclamation of *Moriamur pro Rege nostro*.

*Cruelties of
the French.*

Fortunately the enemy gave him time; they were delayed by the expectation of Victor's advance, by Silveira's movements, and by ill news from Galicia; and Trant profited by their inactivity to guard the bridges, remove the boats, and bring over the flocks and herds of that pastoral country from the northern bank, the owners assisting in this the more readily when they saw some of their cattle seized by the French. Whether it were that Marshal Soult despaired of conciliating the people whom he came to invade and enslave, or if the system of severity was more congenial to his own temper as well as to that of the

tyrant whom he served, he endeavoured at this time to intimidate them by measures as atrocious as those which his predecessor Junot had pursued. Such Portuguese as he suspected of communicating either with Trant or Silveira were hung from the trees along the road side, with or without proof, and their bodies left to putrefy there, all persons being forbidden to bury them. Deep as was the detestation of such enemies which this conduct excited, there were other actions at this time which excited, if possible, a stronger feeling of indignant abhorrence. A party of disbanded militia, with a Portuguese Lieutenant-Colonel at their head, surprised a *chef d'escadron* near the village of Arrifana, and killed him and three dragoons of his escort. He was one of the Lameth family, so noted in the first stage of the French revolution; and having been Soult's aide-de-camp, had served in the Peninsula with a zeal which could never have been employed in a worse cause. Having been a favourite with the commander and his staff, it was determined to take vengeance for his death; it had taken place in a part of the country of which they had military possession, and they thought proper therefore to consider it as an action not conformable to the laws of war. General Thomieres, who had been accustomed to such services, was sent to inflict what the French called an exemplary and imposing chastisement, . . . not upon the individuals concerned, for they were doing their duty elsewhere in defence of their country, but upon the people of Arrifana indiscriminately. A French detachment accordingly entered the village at day-break, seized twenty-four of the inhabitants, marched them into a field, and, having tied them in couples back to back, fired upon them till they were all killed. The rest of the villagers, . . . brethren and sisters, parents, wives, and children, were compelled to be spectators of this butchery; the village was then

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

April.See vol. i.
pp. 128,
501.Operations,
&c. p. 196.

April 17.

CHAP. set on fire, and many of the women and girls carried into an
 XIX. Ermida or chapel, and there *violated.

1809.

April.

*Positions of
the French
and Portu-
guese on
that side.*

Satisfied with keeping the country north of the Vouga in subjection, and believing that Trant's corps consisted of ten or twelve thousand men, the enemy made no attempt to pass that river; Franceschi, who commanded the cavalry, having his head-quarters at Albergaria Nova, and Thomieres at Villa de Feira, where, and at Ovar and Oliveira d'Azemeis, the infantry were stationed. Trant, cautious of exposing his real weakness, advanced only his scanty cavalry to the Vouga; the foot were quartered in Sardam and Agueda, flourishing and industrious villages, which are separated only by the Agueda, a small but navigable stream. The road from thence toward Porto passes through a pine forest, and there, profiting by the broken ground, he had fortified a position, where the enemy could have derived no advantage from their cavalry if they should pass the Vouga. From hence he communicated with Silveira, and even with Porto itself, where there were some citizens ready to expose themselves to any hazard in the hope of serving the national cause.

*Romana
captures
the garrison
at Villa-
franca.*

To gain time in this quarter while a British force was soon and surely expected, was to gain every thing: and Marshal Soult was not in a situation to turn his undivided attention in that direction. Tidings for which he was little prepared, even after what he had experienced of the Galician spirit, came upon him from Galicia. The news of Romana's defeat before Monterrey had been circulated over that province with such exaggerations as were deemed likely to intimidate the people. The French affirmed that Romana himself had been taken prisoner;

* This is the substance of a declaration upon oath by one of the eye-witnesses.

they fired salutes and made rejoicings for their victory, and proceeded even to the mockery of offering thanksgiving in the churches. Romana meantime collected and rested his harassed troops at La Puebla de Sanabria: in spite of all the enemy's artifices his real situation was soon known to the Spaniards, and deputations from some town or village came every day to this faithful General, assuring him that the Galicians were and would continue true to their country. Some 3000 new levies from Castille joined him there, and finding himself more secure and more hopeful than at any time since he had taken the command, he resolved upon striking a blow against the enemy upon the line of posts which they occupied from Astorga to Villafranca. The walls of the former city, ancient as they were, were not to be won without artillery; but Villafranca had no other fortress than the old castle or palace of the Marqueza de Astorga, which the French had occupied; and there he determined to attack them, moving first upon Ponferrada, where he made some prisoners, and recovered a good quantity of corn, several four-pounders, and one dismounted twelve-pounder, part of his own stores and artillery. Having remounted the larger gun, Romana dispatched his Camp-marshal D. Gabriel de Mendizabal to attack the garrison at Villafranca. That officer's first care was to get between them and Galicia, while the commander-in-chief intercepted their retreat towards Astorga: for this purpose he proceeded to Cacabelos, and sent one detachment round by the right to occupy the bridge at the other end of the town, while another filed round by the left to join it there; every horseman taking up a foot soldier behind him to ford the Valcarce, and the smaller river which falls into it. Mendizabal, with the remainder of the troops, advanced along the road. His advanced parties drove in the French at all points, till they retired to the castle. The twelve-pounder was brought up; but the Spaniards

CHAP.
XIX.
1809.
March.

March 17.

CHAP.

XIX.

1809.

March.

found that the French fired securely from the old fortification while they themselves were exposed; upon this they entered, and, with fixed bayonets, advanced to storm the castle. Mendizabal was at their head; a ball passed through his clothes without wounding him. He summoned the enemy to surrender, and upon their hesitating what answer to return, repeated the summons with a threat, that if they refused, every man should be put to the sword. The white flag was then hoisted, and a negotiation begun, which the French were conducting with a view to gain time, till the Spanish commander cut it short, by allowing them a quarter of an hour to surrender at discretion. Upon this they submitted; Mendizabal then, as an act of free grace, permitted the officers to keep their horses and portmanteaus, and the men their knapsacks; and the colonel-commandant of the French, in returning thanks for this generosity, complimented him upon his good fortune in having captured the finest regiment in the Emperor Napoleon's service. The prisoners were about 800. The Spaniards lost two officers and thirty men, eighty-two wounded. The result of the success was, that the Bierzo was cleared of the French, who fell back from the neighbouring part of Asturias upon Lugo, there to make a stand, supported by their main force, which was divided between Santiago, Coruña, and Ferrol.

*Efforts of
the Galicians.*

Marshal Ney had still a predominant force in Galicia after Soult's army was departed; there were garrisons in every town which was sufficiently important, either for its size or situation, to require one, and the French had military possession of the province. But they had yet to subdue the spirit of the people; and the Galicians, who had no longer an example of panic and disorder before their eyes, carried on the war in their own way. Captain M'Kinley in the *Lively* frigate, with the *Plover* sloop under his command, arrived off the coast to assist them. He

discovered none of that apathy for their own country, none of that contented indifference who was to be their master, none of that sullen and ungrateful dislike of the English, of which the retreating army had complained so loudly; he heard from them only expressions of gratitude to the British government and praise of the British nation; he perceived in them the true feelings of loyalty and patriotism, and saw in all their actions honest, enthusiastic ardour, regulated by a cool and determined courage. The invaders attempted, by the most unrelenting severity, to keep them down. On the 7th of March a party of French entered the little towns of Carril and Villa Garcia, murdered some old men and women in the streets, set fire to the houses of those persons whom they suspected of being hostile to them, and then retreated to Padron. To lay waste villages with fire, abandon the women to the soldiery, and put to death every man whom they took in arms, was the system upon which the French under Marshals Ney and Soult proceeded. Such a system, if it failed to intimidate, necessarily recoiled upon their own heads; and the thirst of vengeance gave a character of desperation to the courage of the Galicians. About an hundred French were pillaging a convent, when Don Bernardo Gonzalez, with two-and-thirty Spaniards, fell upon them, and did such execution while the enemy were in disorder and encumbered with their plunder, that only sixteen escaped. During three days the French attempted to destroy the peasants of Deza and Trasdira; the men of Banos and Tabieros came to aid their countrymen, and the invaders at length retreated with the loss of 114 men. A party from Pontevedra entered Marin: here the Lively and the Plover opened their fire upon them, and as they fled from the English ships, their officers fell into the hands of the peasantry. In this kind of perpetual war the French were wasted; a malignant fever broke out among them, which raged

CHAP.
XIX.1809.
March.

March 9.

CHAP.

XIX.

1809.

*March.**Barrios
sent into
Galicia.**Vol. i. p.
751.*

particularly at their head-quarters in Santiago, and many who had no disease died of the fatigue which they endured from being incessantly harassed, and kept night and day on the alarm.

D. Manuel Garcia de Barrios, who held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, had arrived in Galicia early in March with credentials from the Central Junta authorizing him to take such measures as he might deem expedient for its recovery, . . . and this was all with which the government could furnish him. He had, however, two brave and able officers under him, D. Manuel Acuña and D. Pablo Morillo, then a young man, who had already distinguished himself upon the Tagus. These officers took the coast and the interior in this military mission, while Barrios took the southern part of the province; and they communicated with Romana and Silveira. Barrios was with the latter General when the French approached Chaves, and, being prevented by an accident from leaving the town with him, was shut in there during its short siege. Aware that if the enemy recognized him they would probably put him to death, or at best compel him to choose between imprisonment and taking the oaths to the Intruder, he escaped over the walls when they entered the place, and remained for some days secreted in a cottage, suffering severely from a fall and from want of food, and having lost every thing, even his papers. He made his way, however, to the Valle Real de Lobera, where he thought Romana would have taken some measures for raising men; and there he found the spirit which he expected. His report of himself and of his commission was believed, though he had no credentials to produce: a Junta was formed, volunteers were raised, and there, in a confined district, where they were half blockaded by the enemy, plans were laid for the deliverance of Galicia, Barrios having for his coadjutors the abbots of S. Mamed and Couto. Their communication with Romana was impeded by the French at Lugo; but they received

tidings of co-operation in another quarter where they had not looked for it, and prepared with all alacrity to take advantage of the opportunity that offered.

While Soult was before Chaves a party of Portuguese, under Alexandre Alberto de Serpa, crossed the Minho near its mouth, and were joined at Guardia by the peasantry; in a few days some thousand men had collected; the Mayorazgo, D. Joaquin Tenreyro, put himself at their head, and their parish priests acted as officers. The two Abbots, who had taken the title of Generals, and disputed which should be called Commander-in-chief of Galicia, compromised their difference by electing Barrios commandant-general of the province of Tuy and division of the Minho, and they set out with all the force they could muster to join one party of these insurgents who blockaded the French in Tuy, while Morillo and Acuña were directed to join the others, who, officered as they were, undisciplined and ill equipped, had proceeded to besiege the enemy's garrison in Vigo. It had been Soult's intention, neglecting all points of less importance, to concentrate in Tuy all the troops belonging to his army whom he had left in Galicia. But when a column of about 800 men, under the *chef d'escadron* Chalot, bringing with it the heavy baggage of the general officers and the military chest, was on the way thither from Santiago, General Lamartiniere ordered them to Vigo, where the resources were greater both for the men and horses.

The town of Vigo is situated in a bay, which is one of the largest, deepest, and safest in the whole coast of the peninsula. It is built upon a rock; but, notwithstanding the severe loss which the Spaniards, during the War of the Succession, suffered in that port, no care had been taken to fortify it; it had merely a wall, a fort flanked with four bastions on the land side, and an old castle, equally dilapidated, toward the sea. The neighbourhood

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

March.

The Portuguese and
Galicians
blockade
Tuy.
March 10.

Vigo.

CHAP. of Ferrol has made it neglected as a naval station, and Galicia
 XIX. is too poor a country for foreign commerce. There was, how-
 1809. ever, a manufactory of hats there, which were exported to Ame-
 March. rica; and a fishery was carried on so extensively as to afford
 employment for thirty mercantile houses. It derived some im-
 portance also from being the seat of government for the province
 of Tuy. The population amounted to 2500. Sir John Moore
 had at first fixed upon this port as the place of his embarkation,
 and ordered the transports there; and the delay occasioned by
 waiting till they came round Cape Finisterre to join him at
 Coruña gave time for the French to come up, and for that
 battle, which, while it redeemed the character of the army,
 proved fatal to himself.

*The Spani-
 ards appear
 before Vigo.*

Captain Crawford, in the Venus frigate, was off the port, and
 he wrote to Captain M'Kinley, who was then at Villa Garcia, in
 the Lively, telling him how much the presence of his ship would
 contribute to the success of the Spaniards. Meantime Morillo
 arrived to examine the state of the siege. He learnt that a
 reinforcement of 1800 French were at this time in Pontevedra,
 about four leagues off. They had to cross the bridge of St. Payo,
 over a river which discharges itself into the head of the Bay
 of Vigo, and Morillo immediately took measures for defending
 the passage. From Don Juan Antonio Gago, an inhabitant of
 Marin, who was at the head of 500 peasants, he obtained two
 eight-pounders, and from the town of Redondella one twenty-
 four and two eighteen-pounders. With these means of defence
 he entrusted this position to Don Juan de O'Dogherty, a lieu-
 tenant in the Spanish navy, who had the command of three gun-
 boats. While he was taking these necessary measures, part of
 Romana's army, which Soult boasted of having destroyed a
 fortnight before, drove the enemy back from Pontevedra, and
 took possession of the town. Morillo joined them; and being

of opinion that the reduction of Vigo was the most important object which could then be undertaken, they proceeded to that place.

CHAP.
XIX.

1809.

March.

Recapture
of that place

The French governor Chalot, a *chef d'escadron*, had replied to every summons which Tenreiro sent him, that he was not authorised to surrender to peasantry. Captain M'Kinley having now arrived, he was again summoned to surrender, and negotiations were begun, which continued till the third day, when Morillo joined the besiegers with the force from Pontevedra, consisting of new levies and retired veterans, 1500 of whom had come forward to assist in the deliverance of their country; a council of war was held, by which Morillo was appointed commander-in-chief, and requested to assume the title of colonel, for the sake of appearing of more consequence to M. Chalot, whose complaint it was, that he was not summoned by an officer of sufficient rank. Having been thus promoted to accommodate the *chef d'escadron*, he sent him a summons in due form to surrender within two hours. Chalot replied, that he could not possibly capitulate till he had heard the opinion of the council of war, of which he was president; the members were at present dispersed, and he required twenty-four hours to collect them. Morillo returned a verbal answer, that he granted him another two hours, and the French, after ineffectually attempting to prolong the term, delivered in their proposals of capitulation, which were, that they should march out with arms, baggage, the whole of their equipage, and with the honours of war; that they should be conveyed in English vessels to the nearest French port, on parole not to bear arms against Spain or her allies till exchanged, or till peace should have taken place; that the money belonging to the French government, and destined for the payment of the troops, should remain in the hands of the paymaster, who was accountable for it; and that the papers relating to the accounts

March 26.

March 27.

CHAP. of the regiments should be preserved; finally, that the troops
XIX. should not lay down their arms, nor the town and forts be
1809. delivered up, till the moment of embarking. Morillo, with
March. the three French officers who brought these proposals, and
two Spaniards, went on board the *Lively*, to lay them before
Captain M'Kinley, and answer them with his concurrence.
The answer was in a spirit becoming England and Spain. The
garrison were required to ground their arms on the glacis, and
surrender themselves prisoners of war, the officers being allowed
to retain their swords and wearing apparel, nothing more. The
demand respecting the money was refused; the place was to be
taken possession of as soon as the French grounded their arms,
and if these articles were not ratified within an hour, hostilities
were to recommence.

The officers who were sent to negotiate agreed to these terms,
but the ratification was delayed beyond the hour allotted; and
the Spaniards, who were prepared to execute what they had
threatened, began the assault between eight and nine at night;
while those who had muskets kept up a fire upon the enemy,
others began to hew down the gates. An old man particularly
distinguished himself at the gate of Camboa, by the vigour with
which he laid on his strokes, splintering the wood, and when a
ball went through him, by the composure with which he died,
happy to have fallen in the discharge of his duty, and in the hour
of victory. D. Bernardo Gonzalez, the commanding officer of
the detachment from Pontevedra, sprang forward, and taking up
the axe of the dead, continued the same work, notwithstanding
he was thrice wounded; till a fourth wound disabled him, and he
was borne away: seven Spaniards fell at this point. Meantime
Morillo was informed that the capitulation was now ratified, and
forcing his way through the ranks amidst the fire, with great
difficulty he made himself heard, and put a stop to the assault.

On the following morning, when Morillo had made preparations to enter and occupy the place, information was brought him from the little town of Porriño, that a reinforcement from Tuy was on the way to the French. Porriño is about a league to the eastward of the road between these two places, and equidistant about two leagues from both. News, therefore, could not be brought so soon but that the troops must closely follow it. Morillo instantly sent off a part of his force as secretly as possible to intercept them, and he remained hurrying the embarkation of the French, by telling them that he could not restrain the rage of the peasantry. How well they had deserved any vengeance which the peasantry could inflict the garrison were perfectly conscious, and were therefore as eager to get on board as Morillo was to see them there. In this haste, the baggage could not be examined conformably to the capitulation, for the hurry of both parties was increased by hearing a firing from the town. The troops from Tuy had arrived under its walls, and, to their astonishment, a fire was opened upon them. They were attacked, routed, and pursued with such vigour, that out of 450, not more than a fifth part escaped; seventy-two were taken prisoners, and sent on board to join their countrymen; the rest were either killed or wounded. The military chest, containing 117,000 francs, had been delivered up according to the terms; but an examination of the baggage was thought necessary; about 20,000 more were discovered, and the whole of both * sums was distributed among the troops and peasantry. Never had a more motley army been assembled: . . . men of all ranks and professions bore arms together

CHAP.
XIX.
1809.
March.

* It is said that there were some articles of very great value in the baggage, particularly some jewels of which General Lahoussaye had possessed himself at the Escorial, and which Chalot was supposed to have secreted.—Campaign of 1809, p. 20.

CHAP. at this time in Galicia; among those who distinguished them-
 XIX. selves were soldiers and sailors; D. Francisco Sanchez Villa-
 1809. marin, the Alferez of a band of students from Santiago; the
 March. Abbot of Valladares, and the first preacher of the Franciscans,
 Fr. Andres Villagelvi.

*Blockade of
Tuy.*

The French had at this time 5000 men at Santiago, where they were fortifying themselves. Morillo hastened to place Pontevedra in a state of defence against them, and to secure the bridge of S. Payo, that they might not be able to form any farther junction; for they were now calling in all their smaller detachments, and General Lamartiniere had then collected about 3300 men in Tuy, including some 1200 invalids. A fire which was opened against that place across the river from Valença was soon silenced, and the efforts of the disorderly besiegers were not more effectual. Report magnified their numbers to 20,000; but when Barrios arrived to recompose the dispute between the General-Abbots, by taking the command, he found only a fifth part of the estimated force, and only a fourth of these provided with muskets. Having obtained six pieces of cannon from Salvatierra and Vigo, and a scanty supply of ammunition from the same places, from Bayona, and from his Portuguese neighbours at Valença and Monçam, he carried on the blockade in spite of all the efforts of the garrison.

*The Portu-
gueze re-
cross the
Minho.*

Marshal Soult was under no small anxiety for this place; he had recommended it to Ney's especial care; but he had reason to fear that Ney would have sufficient employment for all his force; and he knew what effect the fall of a second garrison would produce not upon the people of the country alone, but also upon his own men; for he was not ignorant that the better spirits in his army detested the service upon which they were employed, and that many even of the worst dreaded it. After

entering Braga he dispatched a party of horse in that direction, for of the many messengers whom he had sent to Tuy since he marched from thence on his expedition into Portugal, not one had returned. They learnt at Barcellos that it was blockaded, that it had thrown shells into Valença, and that the garrison were strong enough to sally and incommode the besiegers. Soult could take no measures then for their relief, and he supposed that the news of his success in Portugal would alone relieve them to a considerable degree, by drawing off the Portuguese from the blockade: so in fact it proved; they recrossed the Minho as soon as they heard of his entrance into Braga, and it was their departure which enabled Lamartiniere to make his unfortunate attempt for relieving Vigo.

CHAP.
XIX.
1809.
April.

Having removed his sick and wounded from Braga to Porto, for they were safe nowhere but under the immediate protection of the army, the Marshal sent Generals Graindorges and Heudelet to relieve Tuy and subdue the intermediate country, where the Portuguese General Botelho had put the Corregidor of Barcellos to death for having welcomed the French on their former reconnoissance from Braga. They entered Ponte de Lima after some resistance; the weak and dilapidated fortress of Valença was surrendered to them, and Barrios, who upon tidings of their movements had made an unsuccessful attack upon Tuy, retired during the night to S. Comba. The French boasted that Lapella and Monçam, Villa Nova and Caminha had opened their gates to them, and that the fort of Insoa, at the mouth of the Minho, had capitulated: the names carried as lofty a sound as if the places were of any strength, or possessed any importance, or could have been defended against them, or held by them. But in fact the only advantage expected or derived from the expedition was that of removing with all speed the garrison and all the

*The French
in Tuy re-
lieved and
withdrawn.*

April 8.

April 10.

CHAP. XIX. moveable effects first from Tuy to Valença, that they might be
1809. on the safer side of the Minho, and then with the least possible
April. delay to Porto. In that city Marshal Soult remained, unable to
prosecute his plans of conquest, and not more in hope of co-
operation from Lapisse and Victor, than in apprehension that a
British force might anticipate their tardy movements.

CHAPTER XX.

OPERATIONS IN LA MANCHA AND EXTREMADURA. BATTLES OF
CIUDAD REAL AND MEDELLIN.

MARSHAL SOULT imputed the failure of his expedition to a deviation from the plan which Buonaparte had prescribed, in not taking possession of Ciudad Rodrigo. Lapisse had been prevented from doing this when it might have been done without difficulty, by the unexpected appearance of Sir Robert Wilson in that quarter; and Victor, who might have taken the place in spite of any resistance which could then have been opposed, was employed in operations more likely to gratify the pride of the French, but of much less importance to the iniquitous cause in which they were engaged.

Reasons, however, were not wanting for this change of plan. The danger from the spirit of the people in Galicia and in Portugal had either not been foreseen, or disregarded; while the French, well knowing in how short a time men of any nation may be made efficient soldiers by good discipline, and seeing with what celerity, after so many severe defeats, the armies of La Carolina and Extremadura had been brought into the field, deemed it necessary to attack those armies before they should become formidable, and destroy them, as far as their destruction could be effected by the most merciless carnage, .. for such Buonaparte's generals, to whose pleasure the government of Spain was in fact entrusted, were determined to make. They had been

1809.

March.*Plans of the
intrusive
government*

CHAP. trained in the school of the Revolution, and the temper which
 XX. they had acquired there fitted them for the service of such a
 1809. master ; and Joseph's miserable ministers, who had penned their
March. edicts of extermination in the hope of intimidating their country-
 men, had the misery of knowing that those edicts were acted
 upon to the letter. Wrung with compunction their hearts were,
 for some of them had begun life with good hearts, generous
 feelings, and upright intentions ; but having allowed themselves
 to be engaged in an evil cause, they were now so far in blood,
 that one deadly sin drew on another, in dreadful and necessary
 series.

*Effect of the
 war upon
 the French
 soldiery.*

By the letters which were intercepted at this time it ap-
 peared that mothers and wives in France congratulated them-
 selves if the objects of their affection were employed in Spain,
 rather than in the Austrian war, so little did they apprehend the
 real and dreadful character of such a service. The armies in
 La Mancha were not better supplied than those in Galicia ;
 weeks sometimes elapsed in which they received neither bread
 for themselves nor barley for their horses, having to subsist as
 they could by chance and by plunder. This mode of life had
 given them the ferocity and the temper of banditti, and would
 have led to the total subversion of discipline among any soldiers
 less apt for discipline than the French. The infantry sometimes
 murmured under their privations, delivered their opinions freely,
 and held sometimes towards their officers a language which
 might be deemed insolent ; but a jest produced more effect upon
 them than a reprimand, a good-humoured reply brought them
 into good humour ; and the prospect of action giving them a
 hope of discharging their ill feelings upon the Spaniards, always
 animated them, and made them alert in obedience. The cavalry
 had better means of providing for themselves, and more oppor-
 tunities of plunder ; they therefore were always respectful as

well as submissive to their officers, lest they should be dismounted and deprived of these advantages. The character of the service in which they were incessantly employed gave both to men and horse a sort of Tartar-like sagacity which perhaps had never before been seen among the troops of a highly civilized people. Savages could scarcely have been more quick-sighted in discovering a pass, detecting an ambush, or descrying a distant enemy. And the attachment between horse and rider became such, that if a trooper waking from sleep saw by the condition of his beast that in a fit of drunkenness he had over-ridden or any ways abused it, he would in the first emotions of self-reproach abjure wine and shed tears, with imprecations upon himself, go on foot whenever he could to spare the horse, and give him the bread which should have been his own portion. And yet this humanizing feeling did not render them more humane toward their enemies. Since the religious wars in France no contest had been carried on with so ferocious a spirit on both sides. That cruelty which in the middle ages was common to all nations had been continued among the Spaniards by the effects of the Inquisition, and by their bull-fights, . . among the French by the inhuman character of their old laws, and afterwards by the Revolution ; on both sides it was called into full action, retaliation provoking retaliation, and revenge revenge. Even the cheerfulness of the French, which is their peculiar and happy characteristic, which if not a virtue itself, is connected with many virtues, and without which no virtue can have its proper grace, . . even that quality was corrupted by the dreadful warfare in which they were engaged. Light minds go beyond the point of fortitude in that disregard of death which the continual presence of danger necessarily induces. That which the wise and good regard with silent composure is to them a theme for bravados and heart-hardening mockery. It became common for the French,

CHAP.

XX.

1809.

March.*Rocca, 84,
87.*

CHAP. when they recognised a comrade among the slain, to notice him
 XX. not by any expression of natural feeling, but by some coarse and
 1809. unfeeling jest. The evil here was to themselves alone; but their
March. oppressions were rendered more intolerable, and their cruelties
 more devilish, because they were exercised mirthfully.

*Temper of
 the Spanish
 generals in
 La Mancha
 and Extre-
 madura.*

The armies under Cartaojal and Cuesta were at this time in such a state that they deserved to have been better commanded, if the government had known where to look for better commanders. With all Cuesta's good qualities, his popularity among the troops, his sure integrity, his courage, and the enterprising energy which in spite of age and infirmities he was capable of exerting, caprice, obstinacy, and a desperate rashness which no experience could correct, made him a most unfit man to be trusted with such a stake in such times. All his desire was to meet the enemy in fair battle, where he could draw out his men in full display; and if all his men had been as thoroughly brave as himself, the old man's system would not have been erroneous. Cartaojal, on the contrary, was so convinced that discipline was every thing, and that the best thing which could be done with his troops was to drill them, that he let slip fair opportunities of exercising them in successful enterprise. It seems almost as if a fatality overruled the councils of the Spaniards, both in the cabinet and in the field; and that if these generals had merely been interchanged, Cartaojal's caution might have saved the Extremaduran army, and Cuesta's enterprise have seized the advantages which were presented to that of La Carolina.

*Reforms in
 the Spanish
 army.*

If severe measures could have restored discipline, they were not wanting; and they were used with such effect as for a time to stop desertion. One essential reform was introduced. All the infantry officers were till this time mounted, and this practice occasioned a great consumption of forage when forage could hardly be obtained for the cavalry; it led also to these farther

inconveniences, that the march of the columns was never conducted as it ought, for want of the immediate presence and attention of the officers; and that in case of retreat the mounted officer had a facility for expediting his escape which might operate as a dangerous temptation upon such officers in such times. No general could have ventured upon this needful reformation without drawing upon himself the ill-will of those whom it affected; the Junta, however, sent orders that no person in the infantry under the rank of major (except the adjutant) should be allowed a horse. This was done by British advice; and if there had been no more jealousy of the British in inferior agents than existed in the Central Junta, the cordial co-operation of the two nations would have met with no obstruction.

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The most efficient arm of Cartaojal's force was the cavalry. It had been under the Marquez de Palacios, who had the reputation of being the best cavalry officer in Spain, and was at this time commanded by the Duque de Alburquerque, D. Jose Maria de la Cueva. This nobleman, then in his thirty-fifth year, united in his own person many of those names which are most illustrious in Spanish history, and he had inherited also in no diminished portion the best and noblest qualities of that proud ancestry. His education had been neglected, so that his mind was not stored like Romana's, neither was it equally under self-government. But his military talents were such as to impress upon all who knew him the belief that if experience and opportunity had been afforded, he would have ranked among the great captains of the age: for he was ardent without being incautious, capable alike of planning with clear forethought and executing with celerity, far-sighted, prompt in decision, and above all endowed with that true and rare nobility of soul which is essential to true greatness.

*The Duque
de Albur-
querque.*

A man of this stamp wins the love of the soldiery as certainly

CHAP. as he obtains their confidence. Hope became their ruling
 XX. passion when Alburquerque was present; and their success in
 1809. some enterprises, and the skill with which their Commander
 March. baffled the movements of the enemy in others, gave the fairest
 He proposes offensive operations. prospect of success if the system of enterprise were persevered
 in. In pursuance of that system, and with the intention of
 making a diversion in favour of Cuesta, against whom there was
 reason to believe that the French were preparing a serious at-
 tack, the Duke proposed to advance upon Toledo, where they
 had 4000 foot and 1500 horse, with 12,000 or 15,000 infantry,
 4000 horse, and twenty pieces of horse artillery; and perceiving
 but too well that his reputation and popularity were regarded
 with jealous eyes, he advised that the expedition should be not
 under his own command, but that of a superior officer; and he
 represented to Cartaojal that the object of forming and dis-
 ciplining the raw troops would be carried on more certainly and
 securely while that part of the army which was fit for service
 occupied the enemy by harassing and keeping them on the
 alarm. The plan was too bold for one of Cartaojal's temper;
 he saw the necessity of training the army, and did not consider
 that enterprise is the best training, and the only, that can be
 carried on within reach of an active enemy. He ordered him,
 however, to advance with 2000 horse and four pieces of artillery;
 and the Duke felt that, as an attempt made with such a force
 could only end in a precipitate retreat, the intention must be to
 wreck his reputation by exposing him to certain failure.

*They are
 undertaken
 when too
 late.*

His representations, however, to the Junta were so well
 seconded, that instructions came for advancing upon Toledo
 with all the disposable force of the army. But when Cartaojal
 communicated this to the Duke, he ordered him to deliver up
 the command of the vanguard to D. Juan Bernuy, and march
 himself immediately with Bassecourt's and Echavarri's divisions

of 3500 men and 200 cavalry for Guadalupe, to reinforce Cuesta. It was sufficiently mortifying for the Duke to be removed from the cavalry which had acquired credit and confidence while he was at their head, and this too at the moment when the measure which he had so strenuously urged was about to be undertaken ; but it was more painful to know that the attempt had been delayed till there was no longer any reasonable prospect of success. With the little body of new-raised infantry which was now placed under his command he began his march for Extremadura, and the ill-fated army of La Carolina commenced its operations at a moment when it was thus deprived of the only General who possessed its confidence.

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*The Duke
sent to join
Cuesta.*

The head-quarters of that army were at Ciudad Real, the cavalry occupying a line from Manzanares to that city through Damiel, Torralva, and Carrion, and the infantry in the towns to the left and in the rear of Valdepenas. Cartaojal thought this a most advantageous position, having the Sierra Morena behind him as a sure refuge if he were defeated, whereas the enemy, were they to be repulsed in an attack, would be exposed in the open plains, and have to cross the Zeucara and the Guadiana in their flight. Having advanced to Yebenes, and found the French ready to advance themselves, Cartaojal retreated upon Consuegra ; that place, to his surprise, was occupied by the enemy in great strength ; he fell back, therefore, to his former position, in the advantage of which he trusted, . . and there, eight-and-forty hours after he had commenced this useless and harassing movement, the French appeared in pursuit, drove in his cavalry, and prepared to attack him in force on the following morning. They were commanded by General Sebastiani, who had superseded Marshal Lefebvre. The action which ensued is, even upon their own accounts, disgraceful to both parties ; to the Spaniards, because they were successively driven from every point where

*Cartaojal
advances
against the
French.*

*Rout of the
Carolina
army at
Ciudad
Real.
March 17.*

CHAP. they attempted to stand, and pursued to the entrance of the
 XX. Sierra; to the conquerors, because Sebastiani stated in his of-
 1809. ficial report that the Spaniards fled on the first charge without
March. resistance, and that he had sabred more than 3000 of them in
 their flight. Eighteen pieces of cannon, and 4000 prisoners, in-
 cluding nearly 200 officers, were, according to the same report,
 taken. The fugitives felt a confidence in the Sierra which they
 had not done in their General, and collected in considerable num-
 bers at Despeñaperros, Venta Quemada, and Montizon; head-
 quarters were established in the village of S. Elena, two leagues
 in advance of Carolina, and the French, without pursuing them
 into the mountains, halted at Santa Cruz, awaiting there the
 success of Victor's operations against Cuesta.

*Operations
 of Marshal
 Victor.*

Marshal Victor's corps, leaving La Mancha about the middle
 of the preceding month, occupied a line upon the Tagus from
 Talavera to Almaraz; his head-quarters were at the latter place,
 where he was preparing materials for a floating bridge, Cuesta
 having blown up the arches of the Puente de Almaraz. A bridge
 was necessary here, because, though they could have crossed the
 river at two other points, there was no road from either of those
 points practicable for artillery. But the bridge could not be con-
 structed while the Spaniards occupied a post which effectually
 commanded the passage. Cuesta was aware of these prepara-
 tions, and also that there was an intention of passing over a de-
 tachment higher up to attack him on that flank; accordingly he
 reinforced it, and removed his head-quarters from Jaraicejo to
 Puerto de Miravete, that he might be near the scene of opera-
 tions.

*The French
 cross the
 Puente del
 Arzobispo.*

March 16.

The French detachment, as he had foreseen, effected their
 passage at Puente del Arzobispo, or the Archbishop's Bridge, so
 called from its founder, D. Pedro Tenorio. A wooden bridge
 which existed in his days had been swept away by a flood; and

as it was there that pilgrims from the western side of the river passed to pay their devotions to the famous image of our Lady of Guadalupe, he built the present edifice of stone, and founded an hospital for their accommodation, and a town, which he named Villa Franca, but which soon took its appellation more conveniently from the bridge. It became a point of considerable importance in the campaigns of this year. The enemy crossed with little or no resistance, and the advanced parties of the Spaniards fell back upon the division which was stationed at La Mesa de Ibor, and thence, after an unsuccessful stand, to the village of Campillo, but in good order; their whole conduct having been such as to satisfy the Commander-in-chief, who occupied a strong position, and expected that he should well be able to repel this division of the enemy, while Camp-Marshal Henestrosa, with the vanguard, would prevent their main body from establishing their bridge at Almaraz.

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March 17.

But the French, who had crossed at Arzobispo, after dislodging the Spaniards from their positions at Mesa de Ibor and Fresnedoso, divided into two columns; the one proceeded by the circuitous way of Deleitosa and Torrecillas, with the intent of getting into Cuesta's rear, between Jaraicejo and Miravete, and thus to cut off his communication and supplies; the other marched by Valduña toward the bridge of Almaraz, to dislodge Henestrosa, and thereby free the passage of the river. Cuesta's army consisted of about 16,000 men; the French were little if at all superior in numbers, but he believed that they had 20,000 foot and 3000 cavalry; and learning that Henestrosa, under the belief that his right was threatened by a superior force, had withdrawn from his post, and that the enemy had already begun to cross the Tagus, he determined to retreat toward Truxillo, lest he should be attacked at the same time both in the front and in the rear. This brave old man was cautious when he

Cuesta retreats from the Puerto de Miravete

March 18.

CHAP. ought to have been bold, and rash in enterprise when he ought
 XX. to have been cautious. Had Henestrosa been supported in time
 1809. (for there had been time enough to support him), the ground
 March. was so strong, and the Spaniards in such a temper, that the
 French could hardly have reached the position at Miravete
 without sustaining a loss severe enough to have crippled them.
 In pursuance of this unwise resolution, on the night of the 18th
 he began his retreat, with the intention of forcing his way through
 the French corps, which he expected to fall in with, and of taking
 up the best position he could find for his own subsistence, and
 for covering the frontiers of Andalusia. But by thus abandon-
 ing an excellent position, he left Extremadura open to a hungry
 enemy.

*Skirmishes
 at Truxillo
 and Mia-
 jadas.*

When the Central Junta were informed of these movements,
 they imputed the disastrous measure to Henestrosa's abandon-
 ment of his post, and ordered Cuesta to proceed against him
 with all the rigour of the law. But the old General, though
 disposed at first to condemn him, was too generous to do this.
 He replied that the Camp-Marshal had in all other cases behaved
 well, and with a courage amounting to rashness, and that in this
 he had acted only under an error of judgement. He met with
 no enemies on his night march, and halting in the morning
 beyond the Rio Monte, learnt that the detachment which he had
 expected to encounter was taking a direction for Truxillo. To
 Truxillo he proceeded on his retreat, and, leaving Henestrosa to
 cover that city, took up a position at the Puerto de Santa Cruz,
 forty miles from the stronger pass whence he had retreated.
 There it was his intention to wait till it should be seen whether
 Alburquerque's division could effect its junction, and whether it
 would make him equal to the enemy. On the following morn-
 ing Henestrosa was attacked, and driven to a little bridge on
 the other side of Truxillo: there he repulsed the enemy, and the

March 20.

skirmishing continued all day, with equal loss on either side, the Spaniards behaving in such a manner as to increase the General's confidence in his troops. Cuesta expected now to be attacked on the morrow, either in front or on his left toward the village of Abertura, and had made up his mind to abide an action. But Cuesta's resolutions were sometimes changed with as little consideration as they had been taken, for he was a man who acted more frequently upon the impulse of the moment than upon reflection. The whole of Victor's force was collected at Truxillo; his advanced parties kept the Spaniards upon the alarm as well as the alert, and Cuesta then began to apprehend that the Puerto de S. Cruz was not defensible against the superior force that would be brought against him, especially as the ground was not favourable for cavalry. In the morning, therefore, he recommenced his retreat, evidently not knowing whither, and with no determined purpose, but in good order and in good heart, for, injudicious and ruinous as all the late movements had been, the men were not yet dispirited. While he was halting near Miajadas to refresh the troops, the *chasseurs* of the enemy's advanced guard approached near enough to expose themselves; the advantage was well taken, and the French Colonel tore his hair in an agony of grief when he saw some hundred and fifty of his finest men cut down. This success was obtained by the regiments of Infante and Almanza. It raised the spirits of the men, a feeling of useful emulation was showing itself, and Cuesta formed the wise resolution (if he had been steady enough in his purposes to have kept it) of exercising them in various movements from one position to another, without exposing them in battle, and thus detaining the enemy till Cartaojal's advance upon Toledo should operate as a diversion in his favour. That same evening, therefore, he retired to Medellin; and the next day, thinking it probable that if he remained the French would attack him on

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March.

Rocca, 93.

CHAP. the morrow, he marched for Campanario, to join Alburquerque,
 XX. who with his little division was coming by way of Aguda and
 1809. Garbayuela. He did not, however, remain there till the junction
March. was effected, but moved to Valle de la Serena, chiefly for the
 sake of facilitating his supplies. Some magazines had fallen
 into the enemy's hands at Truxillo, one of the ill consequences
 arising from his rash retreat; there was no want of food in that
 as yet unravaged country, but he complained to the government
 of the incapacity and irregularity of all the persons employed in
 that department, and protested that unless this evil was remedied
 it would be impossible for him to maintain discipline, or prevent
 dispersion.

*Junction
 with Albur-
 querre's
 division.*

The information which Cuesta received at this time, that a
 train of heavy artillery had been sent from Madrid toward Ex-
 tremadura, made him apprehend the chief object of the enemy
 was to lay siege to Badajoz. The possession of that fortress was
 so important toward the success of their operations against Por-
 tugal, that this design had been apprehended as soon as they
 became masters of the field, and the Governor had been re-
 peatedly charged to omit no means for putting it in a good state
 of defence. Forming a new plan in consequence of this, Cuesta
 informed the Central Junta that he should annoy the besiegers,
 and cut off their communication with Madrid. But he had no
 sooner effected his junction with Alburquerque than he deter-
 mined upon seeking the enemy, and offering battle in the first
 favourable situation. It was not the addition of strength which
 induced him to this measure, for he had expected to meet 6000
 men, and had found little more than half that number;.. but
 long irresolution usually ends in some rash resolve.

*Cuesta of-
 fers battle
 at Medellin*

Having forsaken that strong ground, which, if it had been
 defended as well as it was wisely chosen, would have covered
 Extremadura, it was as much Cuesta's policy to have avoided an

action now as it had been then to have stood an attack, for he knew that he might expect a British army to co-operate with him. Sometimes as facile and vacillating as he was obstinate and impracticable at others, no man was more unfit to command an army in critical times; and yet the honest originality of his character, his fearless and buoyant spirit which nothing could cast down, his energy which neither age nor infirmity had abated, and the warmth of his heart as well as his temper, had won for him in no common degree the attachment not of the soldiers alone, but of those even who perceived and lamented his errors. The enemy at this time occupied Merida and Medellin: the latter town, memorable as having been the birth-place of Hernan Cortes, stands on the left bank of the Guadiana, in a wide and open plain, without tree or cover of any kind. On that plain Cuesta formed his whole force in one line, of about a league in extent, without any reserve, disdaining all advantage of ground, as if he had desired nothing but a fair field and mere individual courage were to decide the day. His army consisted of 20,000 infantry and 2000 cavalry. The vanguard, under Henestrosa, and the Duque del Parque's division, formed the left, which Cuesta took under his own charge, as being placed on the highest ground, from whence he could overlook the field. The centre was under D. Francisco de Trias. D. Francisco de Eguia, who was second in command, was with the right wing, which consisted of the Marques de Portago's division and Alburquerque's, the Duke having with him his own horse. The cavalry were on the left, that being the point where the French presented the greatest force.

Victor's army consisted of about 18,000 foot and 2500 horse. He had collected his whole force there, for the purpose of striking an efficient blow, and destroying, if that were possible, the Spanish army, in pursuance of the murderous system upon

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March.

March 28.

Battle of
Medellin.

CHAP. XX. which he had been instructed to act. They were formed in an arc between the Guadiana and a cultivated ravine which extends from Medellin to the village of Mengabril; Lasalle's division of light cavalry on the left, the division of German infantry in the centre, in large close columns; the dragoons under General Latour-Maubourg on the right, the divisions of Villate and Ruffin in reserve; their front was covered by six batteries of four guns each. The action began about eleven o'clock. These batteries opened on the Spanish infantry, who were ordered by Cuesta to charge with the bayonet and take them. The order was bravely obeyed; two regiments of French dragoons charged the foot, and were repulsed with loss: the German division formed itself into a square, and resisted with such difficulty the resolute attack of the Spaniards, that Cuesta was in full hope of a complete victory, and Victor not without apprehensions of a defeat, till part of his reserve succeeded in enabling his infantry to keep their ground. The Spaniards on the left had taken the first battery; a strong body of horse, protected by a column of infantry, advanced to recover it, and at that moment the whole of the Spanish cavalry on the left took panic, and without facing the foe, without attempting to make the slightest stand, fled in the greatest disorder from the field, most of them to the distance of many leagues. Instances of such scandalous panic were but too frequent in the Spanish armies during the war, but in no instance was it more fatal or more unaccountable than in this; for the day was going on well, the infantry were in good heart, the advantage was on their side; and the regiments which at that crisis disgraced themselves, and betrayed their country, had displayed both skill and courage during the retreat from the Tagus, and had distinguished themselves in the affair near Miajadas.

*Misconduct
of the Span-
ish cavalry.*

Cuesta, who was at the other end of the wing when he saw

this shameful abandonment, clapped spurs to his horse in the hope of rallying them; his staff followed, . . . but in vain; the enemy, quick in seizing opportunity, turned the left, which was thus exposed, and as there was no second line or reserve, defeat then became inevitable. The old General was thrown, and wounded in the foot, and not without great difficulty rescued and saved from capture by the exertion of his two nephews and some other brave and faithful officers. But the day was irrecoverably lost; and the French, having routed the left wing, turned upon the centre and the right.

The right wing of the Spaniards, meantime, had made the enemy give ground, and were following up their success; but Alburquerque, seeing what had occurred in the other flank, proposed to form in close columns of battalions, and begin their retreat. Eguia overruled this, saying he had no instructions to that effect, and not daring even in this evident emergence to act upon his own responsibility. Indeed it is affirmed, that not one of Cuesta's officers knew his intention of giving battle an hour before the action began. Affairs were every moment growing worse, and Eguia having left the right of the line, the Duke gave the necessary command; but it had been delayed too long; the whole force of the French artillery was concentrated upon these columns, who were now the only troops that remained unbroken; a total dispersion took place; and the enemy, forming a chain of cavalry all round the routed army, executed their orders, which were to give no quarter. They had suffered enough in the action to make them obey this atrocious command with good will. They had themselves 4000 men killed and wounded, . . . nearly a fifth of their whole force; their official statement of the Spanish loss made it 7000 killed; other accounts carried it to 12,000. Cuesta could only state that it was very great, and ascertain that a hundred and seventy officers of infantry and ten of cavalry were killed, wounded, or missing.

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XX.

1809.

*March.**Cuesta
thrown,
and wound-
ed.**Dispersion
of the Span-
ish army.*

CHAP.

XX.

1809.

*March.**No quarter
given.*

Weariness, rather than compunction, on the part of the French, at length put a stop to the carnage, and the account of prisoners is variously stated from three thousand to seven ; but it is certain that not two ever reached Madrid. A wounded Spanish officer was brought into the room where Victor was at supper, and the French Marshal said to him, “ If my orders had been obeyed, sir, you would not have been here.” Those orders had been obeyed too well. The dragoons that night in the French camp were rubbing their sword arms with soap and spirits, to recover the muscles from the strains of that day’s slaughter. Their cruelty was not satiated even with this success. A peasant in one of the near villages had a son who was in Cuesta’s army, where he had served for some time. When the army drew near Medellin, this Juan went to his father’s house, and his conversation induced his two brothers, Antonio and Carlos, to go with him as volunteers. Juan was never seen after the battle ; but the father upon searching the field found Antonio’s body, and the other brother, wounded, and weeping over it. He removed the dead son and the living one to his cottage, that the one might receive Christian burial, and the other such help as might have restored him. A party of the French, in their work of pillage, entered the house, and finding a wounded Spaniard there, deliberately shot him, before his father’s face.

*Escape of
Alburquerque.*

When the dispersion of his columns took place, the Duke of Alburquerque found his retreat completely cut off. Four officers were with him ; with these he advanced upon the French cordon of cavalry, and when at the distance of about an hundred yards, turning to one of his companions, he said, “ You see that officer of chasseurs so gaily caparisoned ? I will have him down in a moment.” He then spurred his horse, and rode at him full speed : of course his companions followed ; .. the French officer was startled, and moved rapidly on one side, several of the chasseurs

imitated his movement, and Alburquerque with his friends got through the opening they had thus made. D. Miguel de Alava was one of those friends; he had behaved with distinguished gallantry that day, and just before the dispersion of the last battalions, sword in hand, singly retook a Spanish nine-pounder from two French dragoons who had taken possession of it. Soon after they had broken through, and were still hotly pursued, a wounded artilleryman besought Alava to save him from the general massacre. "Get up behind me," was the answer, "and I will carry you off, or we will perish together." This little party, happily for Spain, effected their escape. About midnight they arrived at a lone farm-house, far enough from the field to feel themselves in safety; and having got some wood upon the fire, and lighted their cigars, they agreed unanimously that the loss of the battle was of no * importance. Such was the spirit of the Spaniards; a spirit which no misfortunes could abate, which no defeats could subdue.

The battle itself, most unfortunate as it was, afforded Cuesta some vindication for the error which he had committed in risking it. It had been fought so well by the infantry, that they had obtained, and that for a considerable time, a decided advantage, till the horse took fright, and abandoned them. But it was after the defeat that the strength of the old man's character appeared with full effect; and certainly on that memorable occasion both the General and the government proved themselves worthy of their country and their cause. The advance of the French was impeded by the weather, a storm of wind and heavy rain having raged uninterruptedly for three

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The remains of the Spanish army collected.

* *Que la perdida de la batalla nada importaba.* The French used to say that the best General in Spain was the General *no importa*.

CHAP. days after the battle, and swollen the brooks so as to render
 XX. them like rivers. A mishap also had befallen them at Almaraz,
 1809. where their bridge gave way while some ammunition carts were
March. passing: many lives were lost, and the operations of the army
 were delayed in consequence. They collected, however, in and
 about Merida, and their advanced parties appeared at Almen-
 dralejo and Villa Franca. This seemed to indicate an intention
 of entering Andalusia; and Cuesta was of opinion, that, know-
 ing the total dispersion of his army, they would not hesitate at
 dividing their own force, and execute this design with one part,
 while they laid siege with the other to Badajoz, which was not
 in a state for making a long military defence. He urged the
 government to send all the disposable force in Andalusia to S.
 Olalla without delay; between that place and Ronquillo, he
 said, was the only position where they could resist the enemy
 with good probability of success, provided there were troops,
 and artillery, and subsistence.

*Cuesta dis-
 graces those
 who had be-
 haved ill.*

He had appointed Llerena as the rallying point for the
 fugitives. The infantry came slowly in, but when Cuesta ar-
 rived he found that the cavalry had collected there with little
 diminution. He thanked the army in his general orders for
 their good conduct at Medellin, excepting by name the horse
 regiments which had so disgracefully taken flight, and thereby
 occasioned that to be a defeat, which, if they had done their
 duty like the foot, would have proved a most glorious and im-
 portant victory. For this offence he suspended three Colonels
 from their rank. It does not appear that any heavier punish-
 ment was inflicted: . . the fault had been too general to fix it upon
 individuals; . . and if recourse had been had to lot, it might have
 fallen upon men who, with the best heart and will, had not been
 able in that precipitate movement to check either their com-
 panions or their horses. The privates were disgraced by having

one of their pistols taken from them, till by some good service they should regain the honour which they had lost.

It was reported that the Central Junta upon the first intelligence of the defeat had fled from Seville. The danger was considered so imminent, that they had deliberated concerning their removal; and the Junta of Seville, who had been consulted, proposed that if such a measure were adopted, absolute power should be left in their hands. But the government did nothing precipitately, and on no occasion throughout the war did it display more magnanimity or so much energy as at this time of trial. The same day brought them tidings of the defeat at Ciudad Real and of that at Medellin; the same gazette communicated both to the people. There was nothing to qualify the disgrace and loss which Cartaojal had sustained; he was therefore quietly removed from the command. Whatever errors the Central Junta may have committed, no other government ever exercised its power with such humanity in such times, no other government ever made such just and humane allowances for inexperience and weakness, nor dealt so generously with the unfortunate. They decreed pensions to the widows and orphans of all who had fallen at Medellin, in proportion to their rank and circumstances, and a badge of distinction to those corps which the General should commend; and they promoted all the officers who had distinguished themselves. They pronounced that the General and the body of the army had deserved well of their country. Knowing that Cuesta had been lamed by his fall, they required him in all his dispatches to report the state of his own health; and though they appointed D. Francisco de Venegas to succeed Cartaojal, they placed both armies under Cuesta's orders, giving him the rank of Captain-general. In the preamble to this decree they said that all the details of the battle tended to console them for its loss, and that the spirit of

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April.

*The Junta
act wisely
and gene-
rously upon
these de-
feats.*

CHAP. XX. Hernan Cortes might have beheld with joy the courage which his countrymen had manifested upon the scene of his childhood.

1809. The example of that day, they said, might make them hope that with perseverance they might form an infantry capable of defending the national independence; an infantry that should be the worthy rival and successor of those famous *Tercios* which under the best captains in the world had supported the glory of Spain in Flanders and in Italy and in Germany.

Their appeal to the people.

The Junta felt it necessary to defend themselves at this time against the base enemies who charged the late calamities upon their misconduct, and who were agitating the people of Seville by false alarms, reporting that the French were within five leagues of that city, and that the nation was betrayed and sold by its Government. In reply to these senseless accusations the Junta appealed to the fact, that in the course of two months it had set on foot two armies for the defence of the Andalusias, consisting of 50,000 men and nearly 12,000 horse. This they had done beside the assistance which they had afforded to other provinces; and when was it known that the injuries which the ship sustains in a storm had been imputed to the pilot? The Junta had issued an abominable edict, whereby, after denouncing the punishment of death against all persons who should endeavour to raise distrust of the existing Government, or to overturn it by exciting popular commotions, they invited informers to denounce such persons to the Tribunal of Public Safety which they had instituted, holding out the promise of secrecy and reward. When this decree appeared Mr. Frere saw to what an atrocious system of tyranny it might lead. Judging of the Junta by their individual characters, he felt assured that they would each have shrunk from carrying such measures into effect; but he was well aware how little the personal characters of any men placed in such circumstances are to be relied on,

Tribunal of public safety.

and apprehended that after some natural hesitation the majority might either yield to the guidance of one or two members, more violent and less scrupulous, or abandon themselves to the direction of this Tribunal of Public Safety; the very name of which, he said, must remind us of the worst revolutionary horrors. But though the State Papers of the Junta were on most occasions wiser than their actions, in this instance their conduct was better than their language; and it now appeared, most honourably for the national character, that, notwithstanding this public encouragement to the nefarious practice of delation, not a single secret information had been laid. If any person, said the Junta, had complaint to make, or suspicion to allege against any of the public functionaries, let him lay his proofs before this Tribunal. But this has not been done, and all the processes which that Tribunal has instituted have been public prosecutions, not one upon the accusation of an individual.

The Intruder and his partizans hoped at this time that the defeat and dispersion of two armies on two succeeding days would break the spirit of the Government, if not of the nation, and that the Junta might be induced to secure themselves and their own possessions by submission. Accordingly a Spanish traitor, by name Joaquim Maria Sotelo, addressed a letter from Merida to the vice-president, saying, that the greater number of the provinces of Spain had sufficiently suffered from the effects of war and conquest, and now the rest were threatened with the same calamities. Filled with consternation, he said, at the defeats of Cartaojal and Cuesta, the honourable Spaniards at the court of Madrid, who could not contemplate without the most poignant grief the desolation of their country, had implored the King to alleviate the distresses of such provinces as were occupied by the French troops, and to prevent them in those which were not yet in their possession. To these prayers

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Correspondence on the Intruder's part with the Junta.

April 12.

CHAP. the King had attended, had ordered him to announce his com-
 XX. pliance to the Junta, and authorized him to confer with such
 1809. deputies as the Junta might appoint, on the best means of ful-
 April. filling his wishes. He could not suppose that they would refuse
 to take steps on which the salvation of Andalusia and the hap-
 piness of the whole kingdom depended. And, as the business
 was most important and most urgent, Sotelo represented, that it
 would be improper to conduct it in writing, but that all the dis-
 putes and irregularities and doubts which it would otherwise
 cause might be obviated by a personal conference. On this
 ground, he hoped that deputies would be named to confer with
 him.

The Junta replied, not to this traitor himself, but to Cuesta.
 "They had not forgotten," they said, "the character with which
 they were invested, and the oath which they had taken, in unison
 with the wishes of the nation. If Sotelo were the bearer of
 powers sufficiently extensive to treat for the restitution of their
 King, and for the immediate evacuation of the Spanish territory
 by the French troops, let him publish them in the usual form,
 and they would be announced to the allies of Spain. The Junta
 had no authority to listen to any treaty, or terminate any trans-
 action, which was not founded on the basis of eternal justice.
 Any other principle of negotiation, without benefiting the em-
 pire, would only tend to degrade the Junta, which had en-
 tered into the most awful engagements to bury itself beneath
 the ruins of the monarchy, rather than sanction any proposition
 which should diminish the honour and independence of the
 Spanish people." This answer they desired Cuesta to transmit to
 the Intruder's agent, and they published the proposal and the
 reply. Perceiving, however, of what importance the safety of
 the government was to the national cause, and the danger there-
 fore of associating it in the minds of the people with any parti-

cular place of residence, in times when no place was secure, they published a decree upon this subject. It began by an avowal, that in their anxiety to provide immediate remedy for the calamities which had befallen the armies of La Mancha and Extremadura, they had imprudently hazarded their own safety by remaining at Seville. But having provided for the reinforcement and equipment of the troops, and furnished all the supplies which were requisite for the defence of Andalusia, they had in cool consideration reflected, that their security was inseparable from that of the state; that the preservall of the deposit of the sovereignty entrusted into their hands was the first of their obligations; and that they could not again expose it to the danger of being destroyed, without doing wrong to the nation which had confided it to them. The speed with which the tyrant of Europe advanced against Madrid in November, and sent troops towards Aranjuez, made it apparent that a principal object of his policy was to strike a blow at the government, and, seizing the body which administered it, cut all the bonds of political association, and thus throw the nation into confusion. These were still his objects: trusting more to his cunning than his force, he still pursued the government, hoping to get its members in his power, and then renew the infamous scenes of Bayonne, by compelling them to authorize his usurpation, or sacrificing them to his rage if they resisted his seductions and his menaces. Thus to degrade the Government in the eyes of the nation itself would, he thought, be the best means of degrading the nation also, and reducing it to that servitude, which, in the insolence of his fortune, this tyrant designed to inflict upon Spain. To frustrate these aims, they decreed, that, whenever the place of their residence might be threatened, or when any other reason should convince them of the utility of so doing, they would transfer the seat of government elsewhere, where they might preserve the august deposit of

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*April.**April 18.*

CHAP. the sovereignty, and watch over the defence, the well-being, and
 XX. the prosperity of the nation. And they declared, that, whatever
 1809. the accidents of the war might be, the Junta would never aban-
 April. don the continent of Spain, while a single spot could be found
 in it where they could establish themselves for defending the
 country against the force and fraud of its perfidious enemy, as
 they had solemnly sworn to do.

*Measures
 for securing
 Badajoz.*

When the news of Cuesta's defeat at Medellin reached Paris, it was affirmed in the *Moniteur*, that by this battle Seville was laid open to the French armies, and that probably by that time Lisbon also was once more in their possession, . . . so confident was the French government of speedy and complete success. In the same confidence, and with the hope of subduing the spirit of the Aragonese, the French Governor of Zaragoza ordered mass to be celebrated in the Church of the Pillar, for the capture of Lisbon and Seville, as events which had taken place. Soult would undoubtedly have advanced upon the Portuguese capital, if he could have relied upon Victor's movements; but that General found that the battle of Medellin had rather raised the hopes of the Spaniards than depressed them. His views were upon Badajoz. Aware of this, the Government, with that promptitude which characterised all their measures at this crisis, supplied the place with money and arms, and addressed public letters to the Junta of that city and the Governor, reminding them that Zaragoza had held out two months not against the enemy alone, but against hunger and pestilence; and that her defenders would be held in grateful and everlasting remembrance, while the names of those who had so basely delivered up Coruña would be handed down for lasting infamy from generation to generation. To the General, D. Antonio Arce, they said, that true glory was to be gained by overcoming great dangers, and an opportunity for such glory was now afforded

him. The Extremadurans were not less brave than the Aragonese, and Badajoz possessed a defence in her fortifications which had not existed at Zaragoza. The soldier fought with best hope, and sacrificed himself with most alacrity, when he saw his commander set the example; and such an example would not be wanting in one whose ancestors filled a distinguished place in the annals of their country. At all times Extremadura had produced heroes. There had the Pizarros, and there had Cortes been born, to be examples now for their countrymen.

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April.

Marshal Victor sent to summon Badajoz, though he was not prepared to lay siege to it; but the pitiable state of the country rendered it always possible that a governor might be found weak enough in principle or in mind to betray his trust. A spirit however such as the time required prevailed there, and the parties which he sent out in that direction were attacked at advantage and driven back with loss. The Junta informed the Government, that, in consideration of the sacrileges which the enemy committed wherever they went, they were enlisting the peasantry under the banner of the Crusade with which the misbelievers in old times had been pursued and conquered. The Government approved this measure, saying that if their forefathers had proclaimed crusades for the recovery of the Holy Land, with much more reason now might they have recourse to the same means for defending their religion in the bosom of their own country against profanations more impious than had been heard of in the darkest ages or among the most barbarous people. And they directed that the persons who should be embodied in these new corps should be distinguished by wearing a red cross on the breast. The Central Junta entertained a thought that this might be extended with good effect; but it did not spread; the feeling and the enthusiasm denoted by such a badge would not have been partaken by the officers, and it might have raised a

*A crusade
proclaimed
there against
the invaders.*

CHAP. XX. temper in the men unfavourable to any expected co-operation with their British allies.

1809.

April.

*Regulations
concerning
the ejected
Religioners.*

Another measure which the Government adopted at this time was intended to lessen the ill effect that the dispersion of so many monks and friars was likely to produce. The same calamities which had set them loose in every part of the country which the enemy had overrun, deprived them also of their accustomed means of subsistence; and it was but too probable that among those who took arms, as was very generally done by those who were able to bear them, the license of a military life might lead to scandals which on every account it was desirable to prevent. A Junta therefore was formed of persons holding high stations in the different Religious Orders, the Prior of Zamora, who was one of the members of the Government, being appointed President. The business of this Junta was to dispose of those Religioners who, having been driven from their cloisters (the edict said), were crying night and day before the throne of a terrible God to revenge the blood of their innocent brethren, which had so wantonly been shed. They were to be distributed in towns, hospitals, and armies, as they might be deemed most qualified; and the Generals were instructed not to receive any persons of their profession unless they produced credentials or commissions from this board.

*Plans of the
Intrusive
Government
April 9.*

Six thousand men had been detached from La Mancha to reinforce Victor after the battle of Medellin. His instructions were to remain between Merida and Badajoz till he should receive advices of Soult's movements, and till Lapisse should join him. The Intrusive Government persuaded themselves that the struggle would soon be over, and Joseph waited only to hear from Marshal Ney of the total destruction of Romana's army, to give orders for marching against Valencia. But the tide had now turned in Galicia; there came no intelligence from Ney

but what was disastrous ; and Soult could neither communicate with Victor nor with Lapisse, neither could they at this time communicate with each other. Soult's communication was cut off by Silveira on the Tamega, by Trant on the Vouga, . . and Sir Robert Wilson, by his position at Ciudad Rodrigo, cut off Lapisse equally from co-operating with his countrymen in Portugal or in Extremadura.

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Of how great importance that position was likely to become Mr. Frere had perceived as soon as Sir John Moore's army began their dolorous retreat ; and he had obtained from the Spanish Government such reinforcement for the garrison as could be spared at a time when demands for aid came upon them from all quarters. The command which they conferred upon Sir Robert Wilson, disposed as the Spaniards were to act heartily with him, was of more consequence than any succour which they could then afford. He meantime had spared no exertions for increasing his little force, and continuing to impose upon the enemy that useful opinion of its strength which they were known to entertain ; for it was seen by their intercepted letters that they had applied for reinforcements under the fear of being attacked by him in Salamanca, where, they said, the inhabitants were as much to be dreaded as the enemy. Sir Robert circulated addresses inviting the Germans and Poles and Swiss in the French service to abandon an iniquitous cause into which they had been forced, and in which they had no concern. There was no press in the city, but the parochial clergy throughout the line of country which he occupied multiplied copies by transcription : many men were brought over by these means, and the enemy suffered not only from this continual drain, but from the suspicion and inquietude which was thus produced. Some stragglers from Sir John Moore's army, and some prisoners from it who had effected

*Sir Robert
Wilson's
conduct at
Ciudad
Rodrigo.*

CHAP. their escape, joined him, having every where received from the
 XX. peasantry every possible assistance and kindness ; for that retreat
 1809. had not lessened in the Spanish people their sense of gratitude
 April. towards Great Britain, nor their respect for the British character. Some convalescents also from Almeida were added to his numbers, and he obtained two reinforcements, each of a more extraordinary kind. A Captain of banditti with five-and-twenty followers, who had exercised their vocation in the country about Segovia, repaired to him, as men who preferred risking their lives in a legal and honourable way, and were desirous of doing good service in a good cause. The other party told a sadder tale. They were South Americans from the Plata, who having been made prisoners at Montevideo in the ill-advised and worse conducted expedition of the English to that province, had been landed in Spain, there to be neglected and left destitute by their own government. More than 200 had perished through want and misery, and the survivors were almost naked and pitiably emaciated with the privations and sufferings which they had endured. There were seven officers among them, who were all men of polished manners ; and the soldiers were willing and well disposed, though deeply sensible of the cruelty and injustice with which they had been neglected.

*Attempt to
surprise
that fortress*

Suspecting that the enemy would endeavour to reach Extremadura, get in Cuesta's rear, and menace Portugal on that side, Sir Robert occupied the Puerto de Baños with a small force under Colonel Mayne. This was effected just in time, Lapisse having marched the greater part of his force to Alva de Tormes on the way thither, but finding it occupied, and not knowing in what strength, the French returned. This was a month before the battle of Medellin, at which time Sir Robert had gone to confer with General Cuesta, no one except the Governor of Ciudad Rodrigo being informed of his absence. Immediately after his

return the French, having been reinforced at Salamanca, attempted to surprise Ciudad Rodrigo. A plan had been concerted with some traitors in the town, who, from an outwork that might easily be stormed, had thrown a bridge to the body of the place, so solidly constructed that Sir Robert had remonstrated against it as promoting their own destruction in case of an assault. Timely advice, however, came from the Corregidor of Salamanca; and the enemy, apprehending from the movements of Sir Robert's troops that a counterplot had been formed with the intent of attempting Salamanca, and cutting off their retreat, fell back hastily, and not without loss. Treachery there had been; but as there was no proof who had been the traitors, Sir Robert took measures for removing the suspected persons without discrediting them.

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April.

March 2.

After it was known that Cuesta had fallen back from the Tagus to the Guadiana, and before tidings of his defeat had arrived, Sir Robert, who had been urging him to form a corps on the Tietar, and thereby preserve from the enemy a fertile part of the country which had not yet been overrun, withdrew his troops from the Puerto de Baños to collect them at Ciudad Rodrigo. Lapisse now brought together the whole remaining force under his command, which had been reduced to about 7000 men, advanced against that city, and summoned it. The officer by whom the summons was sent wished to enter the place with it, but a detachment of the Lusitanian Legion with four guns, under Lieutenant-Colonel Grant, had been stationed outside the works, and he was not permitted to proceed. Before the Governor's answer could be given, the French, in disregard of the custom of war, continued advancing toward the gates, upon which a fire was opened upon them, and continued with effect till they halted. The Governor's reply was, that he should not think of surrendering, even under a greater necessity than

*The French
summon it.*

CHAP. then appeared to exist. Some skirmishing took place, to the
 XX. advantage of the garrison, and on the following day the enemy
 1809. retreated, with some loss both in men and in reputation.

April.

*March of
 Lapisse to
 unite with
 Victor.*

This movement of the French had been so little serious, that it was supposed they had expected some co-operation from Soult's army. Soon afterwards, however, a second summons came in the name of the Intruder, holding out threats to the garrison and inhabitants if they suffered themselves longer to be misled by a few British officers, and promising them King Joseph's favour if they would open their gates. A verbal reply was returned, stating that the proper answer to such a summons was from the cannon's mouth, and there the enemy would receive it if they chose to advance. At this time the peasantry, encouraged by the example of this brave garrison, had risen throughout a wide extent of country; and the situation of Lapisse was becoming critical, when by a movement which ought not to have been unexpected, he moved rapidly toward the Puerto de Perales. That pass he could hardly have forced, if it had been occupied; but Colonel Mayne could not reach it in time after the intention of the enemy was ascertained, and all that Sir Robert could do was to dispatch advices into Portugal, and harass their march by pursuing them with all speed, in the hope that when they arrived at Alcantara, where they must cross the Tagus, they would find it occupied by a sufficient force of Portuguese.

April 7.

*The French
 enter Alcan-
 tara.*

The bridge at that point, which was then one of the durable monuments of Roman magnificence, has given name to a city of some renown, as the chief seat of one of the military orders famous in old times. The town is on the left bank, and the inhabitants, aware of danger, thought to avert it by defending the entrance of the bridge with a kind of *abbatis*, and breaking up the road to a depth of eighteen or twenty feet. These rude works not being

defended by any regular force, nor with any skill or military means, were soon forced, and the town was entered. Lapisse had marked his whole route by the most wanton cruelties, in return for which every straggler who fell into the hands of the peasantry was put to death. He remained only during the night in Alcantara; but that night was employed in plunder, and in the commission of every crime by which humanity can be disgraced and outraged. Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Don Carlos d'España (officers whose names appear often during the war, and always honourably), arrived near the town with a small body of cavalry in pursuit during the night, and entered it in the morning just after the enemy had left it. They found the houses in flames, and the streets literally obstructed with mutilated bodies, some lying in heaps, and others thrown upon piles of furniture and valuable goods, which the ruffians, having no means of removing, had brought out in front of the houses and set on fire. Dogs had been murdered like their masters, swine butchered for the mere pleasure of butchery, and their bodies heaped together in mockery with those of the human victims. The churches had been polluted as well as plundered, images mutilated, pictures, the value of which was not suspected by these destroyers, cut to pieces, graves opened in the hope of finding money or plate concealed there, even the very coffins violated, and the dead exposed.

Victor's force, after he had been joined by this division, amounted to 23,000 foot and 5800 horse. It was apprehended from some intercepted letters that he would immediately make for Seville, and Cuesta had formed his plan of defence accordingly. Portugal, however, was the object of the French, as a point of more importance at that time; but they had let the hour go by, and the English were now once more in the field.

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1809.

April.*

*Campaigns
of the Lusitanian Legion, 65—68.*

*Junction
with Victor.*

CHAPTER XXI.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT RELATING TO THE WAR.

1809.

*January.**Conduct of
the Opposi-
tion in Eng-
land.*

DURING the first success of the Spaniards, the enemies of Government either were silent or joined faintly in the expression of national feeling which was heard from all parts of the united kingdoms. No sooner had the prospect begun to darken than their real wishes were disclosed, and, true to their belief in the omnipotence of Buonaparte, they expatiated upon the folly and insanity of opposing one against whom it was impossible that any resistance could be successful. They dwelt upon the consummate wisdom of his cabinet, the unequalled ability of his generals, the inexhaustible numbers of his armies, and their irresistible force; but they neither took into this account the character of the Spanish people, nor the nature of their country, nor the strength of moral principles and of a righteous cause, being ignorant alike of all. That faith in English courage, by which the fields of Cressy, and Poitiers, and Agincourt were won, and which in our own days we had seen proved, not only upon our own element, our empire of the seas, at the mouths of the Nile and at Cape Trafalgar, but before the walls of Acre, and in Egypt, and at Maida, and in Portugal; . . . that faith which should ever be the first article of an Englishman's creed, for while it is believed, so long is it true; . . . that faith these men had abjured, and substituted in its place a political heresy, baneful as it was false, that upon land nothing could withstand the French. The world was made for Buonaparte, and he had only

to march over it, and take possession. When they were re-
 minded of this Tyrant's guilt, they thought it a sufficient reply
 to tell us of his greatness, and would have had us fall down and
 worship the Golden Image at the very time when the Spaniards
 were walking amid the burning fiery furnace.

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They began by predicting the failure of all our efforts, and the total ruin of the Spanish cause; laying down as "a proposition too plain to be disputed, that the spirit of the people, however enthusiastic and universal, was in its nature more uncertain and short-lived, more liable to be extinguished by reverses, or to go out of itself amid the delays of a protracted contest, than the steady, regular, moderate feeling which calls out disciplined troops, and marshals them under known leaders, and supplies them by systematic arrangements." That it was in the power of England to assist the Spanish people with such troops, such leaders, and such arrangements, they had neither heart to feel nor understanding to perceive. They ridiculed the "romantic hopes of the English nation;" hopes, they said, which had been raised by "the tricks of a paltry and interested party." Could any man of sense, they demanded, any one "above the level of a drivelling courtier, or a feeble fanatic, look at this contest, without trembling every inch of him for the result?"

But the baseness of party went beyond this. Not only were ministers blamed for what they had done in assisting Spain, and counselled to withdraw their assistance as speedily as possible, but the Spaniards themselves were calumniated and insulted. They had neither courage, nor honour, nor patriotism; no love for their country, nor any thing in their country worth defending. What mattered it to them whether their King were called Joseph or Ferdinand, a Buonaparte or a Bourbon? God would dispense sunshine and showers upon the peninsula, whoever was his vicegerent there; the corn and the olive would ripen, and

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the vine and the fig-tree yield their fruits. What folly then to contend for a feeble and oppressive government, of which the loss was gain! The Emperor of the French had rid them of this wretched government; he had abolished the Inquisition, reduced the monastic orders, and would suppress them and all other remaining grievances as soon as the obstinacy of the people would allow him leisure. And indeed the people were sensible of these benefits: . . . a few chiefs, the overgrown aristocracy of the land, had for a while misled them; but those chiefs had only a little hour to strut and fret; and for the people, whose detestation of the French government had been carried to a pitch wholly unauthorized by its proceedings toward them, their eyes were opened now; they saw that Buonaparte was doing good; while, on the other hand, they regarded the English as heretics; and nothing could overcome the antipathy which this feeling occasioned.

The circumstances of Sir John Moore's retreat, and the return of his army, were matter of triumph to the journalists of this shameless faction. "The dismal news," they said, "was at last arrived! the truth of the bulletins was established to its utmost latitude! the pledge of throwing the English into the sea was almost to its literal meaning fulfilled! The Spanish Junta and their allies, after six months' trifling, blundering, and vapouring, were now finally defeated! the spirit of patriotism, both in Spain and Portugal, was extinct! the majority of the Spaniards had all along been indifferent respecting the dynasty by which they were to be governed; yea, many were more attached to the Buonapartes than the Bourbons. The triumphs of France, the defeat and dispersion of the Spanish armies, wherever they were attacked, the retreat and discomfiture of the British forces, . . . these were the melancholy events which concluded the fatal campaign of 1808, the fifth year of the war, . . . this most unjust

and unnecessary war, into which England, in violation of its own treaty with France, had rushed with equal eagerness and frenzy, and which she was now carrying on with the professed object of the preservation of the most corrupt branch of the Romish church!" Such was the language, not of the revolutionary propagandists alone, but of political faction and puritanical bigotry; while the condition in which the troops arrived, and the tale which they related, excited the feelings of the people, and rendered it easy to mislead them. Never had such a scene of confusion and distress been witnessed at Plymouth as on the arrival of this miserable fleet. Above 900 women were landed, all ignorant whether their husbands were dead or living; they were searching through the transports, and officers and men in like manner looking after their wives, children, and friends. Of the wounded there were some whose wounds had never been dressed: many were brought on shore dead: some died in the streets, on their way to the hospitals. They who had escaped from any farther evil, having lost all their baggage, were, even the officers, covered with filth and vermin. Letters were written from the Medical Transport Board to all the surgical lecturers in London, requesting that their pupils would repair to the ports, and assist during the immediate emergency. The form of having passed the Hall was dispensed with, and nothing more required than a certificate from the lecturer whom they had attended. The people of Plymouth behaved on this occasion with the characteristic activity and beneficence of the English nation. A committee of gentlemen was immediately appointed, who sat night and day, providing food, clothing, and assistance. The ladies of the place attended the sick and wounded, and assisted in dressing the wounds: thus supplying the want of a sufficient number of medical men. Many a woman gave her only second garment to her who had none. A charitable fund was raised, and 1400 women and children belonging to the expedition

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January.*Return of
the army
from Co-
ruña.*

CHAP. received immediate relief. The inhabitants of Portsmouth had a
 XXI. less mournful task. That part of the army which landed there
 1809. had not embarked from the field of battle; and they who were
 January. well enough to partake of festivity were feasted in the Town-
 Dr. Neale's Hall. The troops brought back with them a pestilential fever,
 Travels, p. which spread through the military hospitals, and raged for some
 217. months before it could be subdued.

Jan. 19. Parliament met before the issue of Sir John Moore's cam-
 The King's paign was known, but it was understood that he was hastily re-
 speech. treating toward the coast with the intention of embarking, and
 intelligence was hourly looked for with fearful expectation. The
 King's speech was in a spirit suited to the times. He had given
 orders, he said, that the overtures from Erfurth should be laid
 before both Houses, and he was persuaded they would parti-
 cipate in the feelings which he had expressed when it was re-
 quired that he should consent to commence the negotiation by
 abandoning the cause of Spain. So long as the people of that
 country remained true to themselves, so long would he continue
 to them his most strenuous assistance: and in the moment of
 their difficulties and reverses he had renewed to them the en-
 gagements which he had voluntarily contracted at the outset of
 their struggle. He had called his Parliament in perfect con-
 fidence that they would cordially support him in the prosecution
 of a war which there was no hope of terminating safely and
 honourably except through vigorous and persevering exertions.
 The various grades of opposition were distinctly marked in the
 debates which ensued. Lord Sidmouth said, that there prevailed
 among the people a feeling of dissatisfaction which was most
 honourable to them, because it arose from their zealous loyalty
 and generous desires. They were neither contented with the
 extent of the exertions which had been made to support the
 Spaniards, nor with the manner in which those exertions had
 been directed. Something, he trusted, would be done to allay

Lord Sid-
 mouth.

this laudable discontent, while he avowed his full belief that it behoved us to prosecute the war with vigour. Such language was consistent with the constant tenor of Lord Sidmouth's conduct; a man who never in a single instance allowed either personal or party feeling to prevail over his natural integrity. Earl St. Vincent agreed in the necessity of carrying on determined hostilities against the common enemy, but he condemned the ministers alike for what had been done, and what had been left undone. They had brought upon us, he said, the greatest disgrace which had befallen Great Britain since the Revolution. It appeared as if they had not even a geographical knowledge of the Peninsula, insomuch that they ought to go to school again, to make themselves masters of it. Why had there been that disgraceful delay before our troops were sent to Spain? Why had not some of our Princes of the blood been appointed to lead our armies? all those illustrious persons had been bred to arms, and for what purpose, if they were not to be employed? Why had not the Portugueze been called into action? He knew them well; they were as brave a people as any upon the continent of Europe, and under British officers would have presented an undaunted front to the enemy. Ministers ought to have known their value, and if they did not, their ignorance was inexcusable. If the House of Lords did its duty, they would go to the foot of the throne, and there tell the Sovereign the bold truth, that if he did not remove those ministers he would lose the country.

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January.

*Earl St.
Vincent.*

Lord Grenville said there was but one opinion in the country concerning the base and treacherous, the atrocious and cruel invasion of the Spaniards; but one opinion as to the cause wherein they were fighting against the Tyrant who unjustly and cruelly attacked them; but there had been no prospect which should have induced reasonable men to send a British army into

*Lord Gren-
ville.*

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the interior of Spain, though fleets with troops on board, to hover about the coast, and take advantage of every favourable opportunity, might be of essential service. We had injured our allies instead of serving them. We had forced the Junta of Seville to abandon the excellent system of defence which they had arranged, and, by sending an army into the heart of the country, compelled them to engage in pitched battles with regular troops. Care must now be taken not to waste our resources in Quixotic schemes which it was impossible to accomplish. Our army, brave as it was, well-disciplined, and capable of doing every thing which men could be expected to perform, would find employment enough in securing our own defence. If the country was to be saved, its salvation could alone be effected by maintaining a force upon a scale commensurate with the increasing dangers of our situation. But, said he, I have no hesitation in declaring it to be my most decided opinion, that if the system hitherto acted upon be farther pursued, and the whole armed force of the country sent into the interior of Spain, the destruction of this monarchy is inevitable; and that we shall soon be reduced to the same condition with Prussia and the conquered states of the continent. To these speakers it was replied by the Home Secretary, who had now upon his father's death become Earl of Liverpool, that it would ill become us to be dismayed by those reverses which were from the beginning to be expected, and to renounce that system of support to which the nation was solemnly pledged, and in which those very reverses made it a more sacred duty to persevere. He entreated those who were inclined to despond that they would call to mind the lessons of history. There it would be found, that nations, after maintaining struggles for ten or twenty years, in the course of which they had been almost uniformly worsted in battle, had eventually succeeded in securing the object for which they strove. It was

Earl of Liverpool.

difficult to conceive any situation which would better warrant hopes of ultimate success than that of Spain. The people were unanimous in their resistance to the invader; and it was the only instance since the French revolution in which a whole people had taken up arms in their own defence. The territory of Spain was as large as that of France within its ancient limits, and the country possessed many local advantages for defence, . . . advantages, the value of which the Spanish history in former times ought to teach us duly to appreciate. The cause itself was most interesting to the best feelings of the human mind: it offered the last chance of salvation to the continent of Europe; and if it were considered in a selfish and narrower point of view, our own immediate security was in some degree involved in its fate. Was there then nothing to be risked in support of a generous ally? . . . nothing for the re-establishment of the general tranquillity? . . . nothing for our own safety and independence?

The opposition in the Lower House betrayed a wish to shake off the Spaniards and withdraw from the contest in whatever manner we could. Never, said Mr. Ponsonby, since Great Britain attained its present rank, has its public force been directed with so little skill, so little foresight, or so little success; though, in the expenditure of public money, he believed none would accuse his Majesty's counsellors with ever having been wanting in vigour. It was their duty now to examine whether they ought to risk an army in Spain, or confine their assistance to supplies. Elizabeth, under circumstances sufficiently like the present, took care to possess cautionary towns, and thereby assured herself of a retreat, and gained a safe point whither to send reinforcements, as well as a security that the United Provinces should not abandon her in the contest wherein they were engaged. He should not indeed think of abandoning the Spaniards in the hour of misfortune, but he could not admit that the present obligations were to be considered in the light of a solemn

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*January.**Mr. Pon-
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Mr. Whitbread.

treaty ; they had been entered into in a moment of hurry and precipitation ; they had not been laid before Parliament, and were therefore unauthorized by it, and Parliament might approve or disapprove, grant or refuse the supplies for carrying them into effect. Mr. Whitbread declared that if the recent disasters should appear to have proceeded from the misconduct of ministers, the House ought to demand condign punishment on their heads. It was now doubtful whether we had not been proceeding upon false information both with respect to Spain and Portugal. Were our troops agreeable to the people of Portugal ? or were we not obliged to keep a certain force there for the purpose of keeping that people quiet, that is, to strike terror into our friends instead of our enemies ? Were our troops, or were they not, welcome to the people of Spain ? He had reason to doubt that fact. He was fearful that a multitude of Spaniards wished success to Buonaparte rather than to us. Although we must condemn the injustice of Buonaparte in his attack upon Spain, yet his measures were extremely judicious. He abolished the Inquisition, feudal rights, and unequal taxation. This was certainly holding out some temptation to the people to acquiesce in the changes which he wished to introduce, and unquestionably it had produced great effect. The government which England supported was not connected with any thing like a promise of the reform of any of the evils of the old system, nor with any thing like a melioration of the condition of the Spaniards. God forbid that we should abandon their cause while it was possible to support it with any prospect of success ; but he was far from being sure that the time might not come when we should have to treat with France after she had totally subdued Spain. Ministers were justified in refusing to treat on the terms offered at Erfurth ; indeed they must have been the basest of mankind if they had accepted such a preliminary. But he could not avoid regretting that the country had lost so many fair opportunities

of negotiating a peace, and that it had at length been reduced to so foul a one that it could not have been accepted without eternal disgrace. Mr. William Smith said, with a similar feeling, that though he concurred in the propriety of rejecting the last offer of negotiation, he by no means meant to declare that the country ought never to commence another while Spain was in the hands of the French government.

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This first debate made it apparent that the cause of the Spaniards, in which all Britain had appeared to partake so universal and generous a sympathy, was now regarded by a party in the state as a party question; and that because ministers, true to the interest of their country, and to its honour (of all interests the most important), were resolved to continue faithful to the alliance which they had formed with Spain, there were men who felt little concern for what Europe and liberty and human nature would lose if Buonaparte should succeed in bowing the Spaniards beneath his yoke, and who looked on with ill-dissembled hope to the advantage which such a catastrophe might give them over their parliamentary opponents. Their disposition was more broadly manifested when the overtures from Erfurth were discussed, and an address moved approving the answer which had been returned. They admitted that the overtures were insincere, and could not possibly have led to peace, and yet they took occasion to carp and cavil at what they could not in common decency oppose.

*Debates on
the Over-
tures from
Erfurth.
Jan. 26.*

In the Upper House a feeling of utter hopelessness was expressed with sincere regret by Lord Grenville and Lord Auckland: the former asserted that Buonaparte went to Spain with the moral certainty of effecting its subjugation, the most important object of any that he had yet had in view; and that in the course of two months he actually had attained that object. The latter affirmed, that what we called the Spanish cause was

*Lord Gren-
ville.
Lord
Auckland.*

CHAP. lost, for the present at least, and without any rational hope that
 XXI. it could be soon revived. To such opinions Mr. Canning alluded,
 1809. saying, it was said that whenever Buonaparte declared he would
 January. accomplish any measure, his declaration was to be received as
 Mr. Can- the fiat of a superior being, whom it was folly to resist *He* never
 ning. pledged himself to any thing but what he could accomplish!
 Jan. 31. *His* resolves were insurmountable! *His* career not to be stopped!
 Such, said the orator, is not my opinion, nor the opinion of the
 British people. Even were the ship in which we are embarked
 sinking, it would be our duty still to struggle against the element.
 But never can I acknowledge that this is our present state. We
 are riding proudly and nobly buoyant upon the waves! To the
 argument that we ought, as Buonaparte had done, to have held
 out a prospect of political reform to the Spaniards, he replied
 we had no right to assume any dictatorial power over a country
 which we went to assist. We were not to hold cheap the in-
 stitutions of other countries because they had not ripened into
 that maturity of freedom which we ourselves enjoyed; nor were
 we to convert an auxiliary army into a dominating garrison; nor,
 while openly professing to aid the Spaniards, covertly endeavour
 to force upon them those blessings of which they themselves
 must be the best judges. If the Spaniards succeeded, they
 would certainly be happier and freer than they had hitherto
 been; but that happiness and freedom must be of their own
 choice, not of our dictation. The Central Junta was not indif-
 ferent to this prospective good, for it called upon all literary
 men to contribute their assistance in suggesting such laws as
 might best be enacted for the good of the state. If the sug-
 gestion of such laws were to accompany a subsidy, he doubted
 much whether it would meet with assent: and sure he was that
 the Spaniards could not but dislike them, if dictated at the point
 of the bayonet. In these enlightened days, said he, the im-

position of a foreign dynasty is not regarded with so much abhorrence, as it is considered what useful internal regulations the usurpers may introduce! So detestable a mode of reasoning is confined to only a few political speculators; the general sense and feeling of mankind revolt at it. There is an irresistible impulse which binds men to their native soil; which makes them cherish their independence; which unites them to their legitimate princes; and which fires them with enthusiastic indignation against the imposition of a foreign yoke. No benefit to be received from a conqueror can atone for the loss of national independence. Let us then do homage to the Spanish nation for their attachment to their native soil; an attachment which in its origin is divine; . . . and do not let us taunt them with being a century behind us in civilization or in knowledge, or adhering to prejudices in religion, in politics, or in arts, which we have happily surmounted.

The more moderate opposition members, such as Mr. Ponsonby and Lord Henry Petty, agreed that the government had taken a proper course in demanding an explanation with regard to Spain before any negotiation was commenced. But Mr. Whitbread said he lamented that the offer had been so abruptly put an end to. Even in breaking with France it was better to break with her in a spirit of as little acrimony as possible, . . . for, let gentlemen say what they would, we must ultimately treat with France, . . . to this complexion we must come at last; and it would not be easy to say when we might calculate upon even as good terms as we had been offered in the late overture. With respect to Spain, the hopes he once had were nearly gone; and the various reports from different quarters, from some of the want of wisdom in the government, from others of want of energy in the people, were not calculated to revive them. Perhaps before this Portugal was reconquered. Buonaparte was

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Lord H.
Petty.

Mr. Whit-
bread.

CHAP. hastening to fulfil all his prophecies. If ever we wished for
 XXI. peace, with this man probably we must make it, and it was
 1809. always wrong to use insulting language towards him; the least
January. price of peace would be for us to use something like decorous
 language to a power which was perhaps the greatest that had
 ever existed on the face of the world. And it was extraordinary
 indeed that a government which had committed the attack upon
 Copenhagen should call the usurpation of Spain unparalleled!
 It really carried with it an air of ridicule. Why should we
 talk of atrocity? Why should we blasphemously call on our God
 . . we, the ravagers of India, . . we who had voted the solemn
 thanks of the House to the despoilers of that unhappy, perse-
 cuted country?

Thus did Mr. Whitbread attempt, . . not indeed to justify
 Buonaparte, few of his admirers had at that time sufficient
 effrontery for this, . . but to defend him by the yet viler method
 of recrimination; to apologize for his crimes by the false as-
 sertion that England had perpetrated crimes as great; to stand
 forth as the accuser of his country; and to disarm it, as far as his
 ability and his influence might avail, of its moral strength, and
 of its hope in God and a good cause. Six months before he had
 prayed God to crown the efforts of the Spaniards with success
 as final as those efforts were glorious. "Never," he then said,
 "were a people engaged in a more arduous and honourable
 struggle. Perish the man, he then exclaimed, who would enter-
 tain a thought of purchasing peace by abandoning them to their
 fate! Perish this country rather than its safety should be owing
 to a compromise so horridly iniquitous!" It was now apparent
 that the sympathy which had been thus strongly expressed had
 not been very deep. He moved as an amendment upon the
 address, that though we should have witnessed with regret any
 inclination to consent to the abandonment of the cause of Spain,

it did not appear that any such disgraceful concession was required as a preliminary by the other belligerent powers. The stipulation, therefore, on our part, that the Spaniards should be admitted as a party was unwise and impolitic ; an overture made in respectful terms ought to have been answered in more moderate and conciliatory language, and immediate steps taken for entering into negotiation on the terms proposed in that overture. The amendment concluded by requesting that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to avail himself of any opportunity which might offer of acceding to, or commencing a negotiation for the restoration of the blessings of peace, on such terms as the circumstances of the war in which we were engaged might render compatible with the true interests of the empire, and the honour of his Majesty's crown.

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The proposed amendment provoked a severe reply from Mr. Croker. He exposed the inconsistency of the mover, who in his letter to Lord Holland, when he had stated his opinion that it became the Government at that time to negotiate, recommended that "the complete evacuation of Spain by the French armies, the abstinence from all interference in her internal arrangements, and the freedom of the Royal Family, should be the conditions of the negotiation." Mr. Croker commented also with just indignation upon the strain of argument which Mr. Whitbread had pursued. "He has set out," said he, "by doing Buonaparte the favour of trying to find a parallel for his attack on Spain ; and he boasts of having found many. But in the registers of British discussion, in the recollections of British feeling, I defy the honourable gentleman to find a parallel for his own speech, . . . a speech calculated only to plead the enemy's cause. I do not mean to represent him as intentionally their advocate ; but I will assert that, whether intentionally or not, he has taken that course by seeking for examples which might keep the French govern-

Mr. Croker

CHAP. ment in countenance. But even if he were not so deeply to
 XXI. blame for this, . . . supposing even that this course was necessary
 1809. to his argument, . . . even then he had been in error: he had pro-
 February. duced no parallel instance; the history of the world did not fur-
 nish one; and he had fruitlessly gone out of the path to weaken
 the cause of his country."

*Mr. Whit-
 bread's
 speech cir-
 culated by
 the French
 government.*

Mr. Whitbread's amendment was so little in accord with the feelings even of his colleagues in opposition, that it was not put to the vote. But his speech was so favourable to Buonaparte, and so suited to the furtherance of his purposes, that the French government availed themselves of it. A very few omissions adapted it to the meridian of Paris; it was translated, inserted in the provincial papers as well as those of the capital, and circulated through France and those countries which were under its dominion or its influence. To deceive the French and the people of the continent by the official publication of false intelligence was part of Buonaparte's system; but no fabrication could so well have served his purpose as thus to tell them that an English statesman, one of the most eminent of the Whigs, of the old advocates of liberty, a leading member of the House of Commons, had declared in that House that the overtures of peace made by France were unexceptionable, and had been unwisely, impolitically, and unnecessarily answered with insult; that Buonaparte, wielding the greatest power which had ever existed, was hastening to fulfil all his prophecies; that England must be reduced to treat with him at last, and therefore that the King of England ought to be advised by his Parliament to commence a negotiation as soon as possible upon such terms as circumstances might permit!

*Debates on
 the Portu-
 guese cam-
 paign.*

The debates upon the campaign in Portugal and the Convention of Cintra terminated in confirming by the sense of Parliament the opinion which the Court of Inquiry had pronounced.

Events indeed had followed in such rapid succession, that the Convention having been regarded only as to immediate interests, not with reference to principles which are of eternal application, seemed like a subject obsolete and out of date. Ministers derived another advantage from the manner in which they were attacked. No man could blame them, except in the mere spirit of opposition, for having sent an expedition to Portugal; the public sense of what had been lost by the armistice sufficiently proved the wisdom of its destination; and that the force had been sufficient for its object we had the decisive authority of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and the complete evidence of the victory which he had gained. The discussions upon the expedition to Spain were more frequent and more angry. Both parties, however, as soon as the subject was brought forward, agreed in voting the thanks of Parliament to the army for their services, and a monument to the General. It had been the intention of Government to make a provision for the female part of Sir John Moore's family; but upon an intimation of their wish that it might be transferred to a male branch, a pension of a thousand pounds was granted to his elder brother. This was a becoming act of national generosity; but the opposition eagerly consecrated, and as it were canonized, the memory of Sir John Moore, that they might impute the whole misconduct of the campaign, with all its loss and its disgrace, to Government; and the ministers, always willing to avert a harassing investigation, were well pleased that their opponents should thus preclude themselves from pressing it upon military grounds.

Inquiry, however, was called for, not upon that reasonable ground, but in the avowed hope that it would prove the ministry guilty of that utter misconduct for which their enemies so loudly and exultingly arraigned them. Lord Grenville said it was indeed a sinking country if such mismanagement were suffered to continue in the midst of our unexampled perils and dif-

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*Both parties
agree in ex-
tolling Sir
J. Moore.*

*Inquiry
into the
campaign
in Spain
called for.*

*Lord Gren-
ville.*

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*Lord Er-
skine.*

ficulties. The hand of Providence appeared to be on us. Within three years we had lost the two great statesmen in whom the nation reposed its confidence, an admiral who had carried our navy to a pre-eminence which it never before enjoyed, and now a great military chieftain, whose talents were of the first order. "Was it possible," Lord Erskine asked, "to deplore the loss of friends whom we loved, and of men whose lives were precious to their country, without lamenting in bitterness that they were literally immolated by the ignorance and folly of those who now wished to cover their own disgrace by the just and natural feelings of the public towards men who had died for their native land? But for their immortal renown, it would have been better for them, certainly much better for their country, to have shot them upon the parade of St. James's Park, than to have sent them, not to suffer the noble risk of soldiers, in a practicable cause, but to endure insufferable, ignoble, and useless misery, in a march to the very centre of Spain, where for them to attack was impracticable, and to retreat only possible, by unparalleled exertions: and what sort of retreat?... a retreat leaving upon the roads and in the mountains of Spain from 8000 to 9000 of our brave men, dying of fatigue, without one act of courage to sweeten the death of a soldier. What could, then, be a more disgusting and humiliating spectacle, than to see the government of this great empire, in such a fearful season, in the hands of men who seemed not fit to be a vestry in the smallest parish?"

Feb. 24.

*Mr. Pon-
sonby.*

Mr. Ponsonby insisted that it was the duty of ministers, before they engaged in such a contest, to have ascertained the real state of Spain. It was not sufficient to know that monks could excite some of the poorer and more ignorant people to insurrection. The disposition and views of the upper classes, who from their rank and property possess a natural influence,

ought to have been ascertained ; and, above all, the inclination of that middle class which is every where the great bond and cement of connexion between the higher and lower orders. Some information too they might have collected from history before they ventured upon sending an army into Spain : for, as far as history went, they would not find much to encourage them in relying upon the character of the Spaniards for cordial or active co-operation in such a contest. “I am not disposed,” said he, “to speak disrespectfully of the Spaniards ; but history does not represent them as remarkable for that daring, enthusiastic, high-spirited disposition which prompts and qualifies men to make a great struggle for freedom and independence. The most powerful principles to excite mankind have uniformly been religion and liberty : have either been found materially to operate upon the recent movements of the Spanish people ? These are the only principles which have ever served to excite the noble daring, the heroic resolution to conquer or die ; and it was necessary therefore to inquire whether they were actuated by both, or by either, to calculate upon the probability of their success in the war. If they were influenced by neither of these motives, how could any reflecting man look for energy, zeal, or perseverance among them ? Let me not be misinterpreted. I do not desire that they, or any people, should become wild or mad, and destroy society itself in order to improve its condition ; that in order to remove abuses they should tear away all their ancient institutions ; that in order to reform religion they should destroy Christianity itself ; but I do say, while the Inquisition existed, that if the Spaniards were not sensible of the multitude of abuses which pressed upon them, if they felt not a wish to reform abuses and to restore their rights, and were not willing, for that reformation and restriction, to encounter all the dangers and endure all the difficulties inseparable from the species of

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warfare in which they were engaged ; I say, that if this people were not actuated by the wish for, and encouraged by the hope of an improved condition, it was impossible for any statesman, for any man of common sense, to suppose that they would fight with success. If they were insensible of the cause of their degradation, and indifferent as to its removal, it was in vain for England to calculate upon materially exciting the spirit, or effectually aiding the exertions of such a people."

Then, after intimating a belief that Sir John Moore had acted against his own judgement, and in consequence only of Mr. Frere's repeatedly urging him to advance, he asked whether the Spaniards had been found willing and cordial in their assistance to the British army ? whether they had received them as deliverers and guests, or with jealousy and fear ? " Perhaps," he continued, " ministers may say that the Spaniards did not discover all that cordiality which was expected. But can it be permitted that they shall say this after they have involved the country in such a ruinous, unproductive, and inglorious struggle ? For let us not forget this, that, although we have obtained renown for our military bravery, England has for ever lost its character as a military nation. Were you to propose to send your soldiers again, as an encouragement and aid to other foreign powers, what would be the answer ? It would be, ' No ! Your troops are good ; your officers are skilful and courageous ; but there is something in the councils of England, or in the nature and manner of the application of her force, that renders it impossible ever to place any reliance upon her military assistance.' When you appeared in Holland and Germany as auxiliaries, you failed ; true it is, your force in these cases was comparatively small, and the question remained undecided. The problem is solved, however, by what has passed in Spain. You professed to send forth the largest army that ever went from England, for the purpose of

meeting the force of France ; and what has been the result ? A shameful retreat before the armies of France, and a disgraceful desertion of the power you wished to assist. This campaign, I say, will have an influence upon the character of England long after all of us shall cease to live. I ask the House, then, to institute an inquiry. I call upon the country to seek for one, in order to show how much distress, difficulties, dangers, and perils unexampled, our soldiers have endured in this fruitless and inglorious struggle. I call upon you, by the gratitude you owe to those who were thus shamefully sacrificed at Coruña, . . . by that which you owe to their companions in arms, who are still in existence, and able and willing to defend their country ; I call upon you, by the interest you take in those who yet remain, to institute this inquiry, in order that they may not be sacrificed by similar misconduct upon a future occasion. I call upon you, as you value the glory of our country, the preservation of our future power and reputation, as well as our interest, by every thing that can excite the exertions of brave men, to institute this investigation."

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Lord Castlereagh, in his reply to this speech, observed with sarcastic truth, there could not be a greater mistake than to suppose they who called for inquiry meant that they wanted information. It happened, however, that by pronouncing upon facts of which he was imperfectly informed, Mr. Tierney was led into a course of argument most unfavourable to the intentions of himself and those who acted with him. Why, he demanded, had not the 10,000 men who were embarked been sent forward with all speed to Sir John Moore's assistance ? On board the transports they were, and Lord Castlereagh took them out. Had they been sent, Sir John might have been still alive, and a real diversion then have been effected ; for our army might for some time have maintained itself in Coruña, and have obliged the enemy

*Lord Castle-
reagh.*

*Mr. Tier-
ney.*

CHAP. to turn their whole attention to that quarter. The loss which we
 XXI. had sustained in our retreat, he said, was carefully glossed over,
 1809. but he understood that it was at least from 8,000 to 10,000 men.
February. Such a scene of woe, indeed, had scarcely ever been heard of. Think of blowing up the ammunition, destroying three or four hundred waggons, staving the dollar casks, leaving the artillery to be cast away, and the Shrapnell shells to the French, who would thus discover their composition! He meant not to ascribe these disasters in the smallest degree to the General: all might have been avoided, if only 10,000 men had been sent to his support. Inquiry, therefore, was more than ever necessary; and by the result of that night's debate Great Britain would judge of the character of the House of Commons. That House ought to convince the army that, though they might be exposed to unavailing exertions, and useless hardships, by the mismanagement of ignorant councils, they had protection in Parliament, who would never be slow in attending to their interest and their comforts. Unless the officers of the army had this support to look to, all would with them be absolute despair; for, with the exception of some of the connexions of ministers, there was not an officer who came home from the expedition who did not vent execrations against the authors of it. . . there was not a man engaged in that retreat of unparalleled hardship who did not curse those who placed them in such a situation.

The fact was as Mr. Tierney stated it; . . he was only mistaken in imputing it to the government. Four regiments and two troops of horse artillery were actually on board, and had been disembarked. Five more regiments of cavalry were under orders for Spain, and would have been dispatched as soon as the transports could return for them. Nor had Mr. Tierney overstated the advantages which might have been expected had they arrived at the scene of action. On the contrary, far more

important results than that of maintaining Coruña for a time must have ensued, if the British army had found these reinforcements there, even if it could be supposed that the retreat would have been made with such desperate precipitance, the General knowing he had such support at hand. He would then have retreated like one who was falling back upon his reinforcements, not flying to his ships. Broken in strength as the army was by severe exertion and excessive sufferings, broken in spirit too and almost in heart by the manner of its retreat, it had beaten the pursuers in fair battle, and 10,000 fresh troops would have turned the tide. Galicia would have been delivered from the enemy, Portugal saved from invasion, and Soult's army have been cut off, unless they could have crossed the mountains faster in flight than they had done in pursuit. Ministers would indeed have deserved the imputation so confidently cast on them by their opponents, if these advantages had been lost by their misconduct. Mr. Canning stated in their defence, that the reinforcements had been countermanded by the Generals, and empty transports sent out in conformity to their distinct requisition. "It was an afflicting circumstance," said he, "to send out empty, for the purpose of bringing off the army, those ships which had been filled for the purpose of reinforcing it. Among all the decisions to which I have been a party, no one has ever in the course of my life occurred which gave me more pain than this; . . . every dictate of the understanding was tortured, every feeling was wrung by it. But his Majesty's ministers had no choice. They felt that it would excite dissatisfaction in England and dismay in Spain; and yet they had no alternative."

Mr. Canning then proceeded to examine the more general arguments of Mr. Ponsonby. "It had been argued," he said, "that before the assistance of this country had been given to Spain, we ought to have ascertained whether or not the Spaniards

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Mr. Can-
ning.

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XXI. by the higher ranks ; whether they were wedded to their ancient
1809. institutions, or disposed to shake off the oppression of their former
February. government ; to abjure the errors of a delusive religion ; and to
forswear the Pope and the Grand Inquisitor. The policy of his
Majesty's government was different. They felt that the Spanish
nation wanted other and more aids than lectures on municipal
institutions ; they were content that a British army should act
in Spain, though the Grand Inquisitor might have been at the
head of the Spanish armies ; though the people might have been
attached to their ancient monarchy, and with one hand upheld
Ferdinand VII., whilst with the other they worshipped the Lady
of the Pillar. God forbid we should be so intolerant as to make
a conformity to our own opinions the price of our assistance to
others, in their efforts for national independence ; to carry the
sword in one hand, and what we might choose to call the Rights
of Man in the other ! But the enthusiasm of the Spaniards was
not pretended ; what they had in their mouths, they felt in their
hearts : they were enthusiastically determined to defend their
country to the last extremity, or to perish under its ruins. The
cause was not desperate ; the spirit of the people was unsubdued ;
the boundaries of French power were confined within the limits
of their military posts ; the throne of Joseph was erected on sand,
and would totter with the first blast ; and Buonaparte, even
should he succeed, instead of a yielding and unrepenting ally,
would have an impatient, revolting, and turbulent nation to keep
down. The cause was not therefore desperate, because our army
of 30,000 or 40,000 men had been obliged to withdraw ; and it
was not just to the country, or to the army, which he hoped
would again prove the stay and bulwark of Europe, to assert
that its honour was in consequence gone for ever. All the
energy of liberty, and all the sacredness of loyalty, still sur-

vived; and the Spanish revolution was, he trusted, destined by Providence to stand between posterity and French despotism, and to show to the world, that, amidst the paroxysms of freedom, a monarch might still be loved. If, therefore, ministers could show that these were the feelings by which they were influenced, and that they had acted up to these feelings, their justification would be complete; and he was convinced that the liberal and disinterested measures of his Majesty's government towards Spain were more congenial to British feeling, and more honourable to the national character, than if they had set out in their career of assistance by picking up golden apples for ourselves. For himself, as an humble individual of the government, and having a share in these transactions, the recollection would be a source of gratification which he should carry with him to the grave. If we had been obliged to quit Spain, we had left that country with fresh laurels blooming upon our brows; and whatever failure there had been upon the whole might still be repaired. If that was to be brought forward as the ground for accusation, he stood there for judgement. The object of the motion was to take the reins of government out of the hands of those who held them; and upon that ground he desired that the present ministers might be judged by comparison. Was it the pleasure of the House that Spain should be abandoned? Was it a principle agreed upon, that the direction of government should be committed to other hands? Was it then a settled opinion, that there was something fatal in the will, and irresistible in the power of Buonaparte? and was the world to submit to his tyrannous resolves, as to a divine infliction? Whatever might be the fruits of Buonaparte's victories in other respects, the spirit of the Spanish nation was yet unsubdued. His fortune, no doubt, had been augmented; but still it was fortune, not fate; and therefore not to be considered unchangeable and fixed. There

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was something unworthy in the sentiment that would defer to this fortune, as to the dispensations of Providence ; looking upon it as immutable in its nature, and irresistible by human means :

‘ Te

Nos facimus Fortuna Deam, cœloque locamus.’”

Mr. Wind-
ham.

This was a triumphant reply. The arguments of the opposition had been so misdirected, that there was no occasion of subterfuge, sophistry, or the shield of a majority to baffle them : they were refutable by a plain statement of facts, where they relied on facts, . . by an appeal to principles and feelings, where they pretended to philosophy. Mr. Canning spoke from his heart. There was nothing which he was required to extenuate or to exaggerate ; all that was needful was a manly avowal of what had been done, and of the reasons why it had been done. He had a good cause to plead, and he pleaded it with a force and eloquence worthy of the occasion. The same cause was in effect pleaded by Mr. Windham, though he took his place in the opposition ranks, and voted for the inquiry as an opposition question. “ Our expedition to Spain,” he said, “ had been so managed as to produce what was much worse than nothing. What we called our best army had retreated from the field without striking a blow, on the mere rumour of the enemy’s advance. We had shown them that our best troops could do nothing, and therefore that there was little chance of their undisciplined peasantry succeeding better. There were two courses which might have been pursued, either that of striking a blow upon the Ebro while the enemy were weak and their attention distracted, . . or, if this were hopeless, of proceeding at once upon some general plan with a view to the final deliverance of the Peninsula. The first was a mere question on which few but those in office could have the means of judging. But if the force sent to the Ebro

had (as it ought to have been) been chiefly cavalry (which the enemy most wanted, and we could best spare), such a force, even if it had been found insufficient for its immediate object, could have retired in safety to that part of the Peninsula where, at all events, and in every view, the great mass of our force should be collected . . . the neighbourhood of Cadiz and Gibraltar. These were the only two places from which a large body of troops, when pressed by a superior army, could hope to get away ; and there was no other part of Spain to which a British army, large enough to be of any use, could with propriety be trusted.

“ There, therefore,” Mr. Windham continued, “ I would have collected the greatest force that this country could by any possibility have furnished. There was no reason why we might not have had an army of 100,000. An hundred thousand men, with Gibraltar to retreat upon, was a far less risk to the country than 30,000 in the situation in which the ministry had placed them ; nay, than 30,000 in the very situation spoken of ; because a general must be miserably deficient in knowledge of his business, who, in such an abundant country, and with such a fortress behind him, would, with an army of that amount, suffer himself to be prevented from making good his retreat, by any force which the enemy could bring against him. For when we talked of Buonaparte’s numbers, we must recollect where those numbers were to act. To meet in the south of Spain a British force of 100,000, Buonaparte must bring over the Pyrenees a force of not less than 200,000 ; to say nothing of the demand that would be made upon him by the Spanish army which might be raised in that part of Spain, to co-operate with the British, and which the presence of such a British force would help to raise. Buonaparte would have a whole kingdom, which he must garrison, behind him, if he would either be sure of his supplies, or make provision against total destruction, in the event of any reverse. He must

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CHAP. fight us at arm's-length, while our strength would be exerted
 XXI. within distance, with an impregnable fortress at hand, furnish-
 1809. ing a safe retreat in case of disaster, and a source of endless
 February. supply, by means of its safe and undisturbable communication
 with this country. And let it not be said, that while the army
 continued in the south, Buonaparte might continue master of the
 north. What mastery could he have of any part of Spain, while
 such an army could keep on foot in any other? And why, in
 case of success, did the security of its retreat require that it
 should never advance? There was never any thing so demon-
 strable, therefore, as that the only way of carrying on effectually
 a campaign in Spain, whatever else you might have done, was to
 collect your army in the south. A force raised to the greatest
 possible amount to which the mind and means of the country, . .
 then elevated above itself, and exalted to something of a preter-
 natural greatness, . . could have carried it, should have been
 placed where it would have been safe from the risk of total loss,
 and would not have been kept down by the idea that the deposit
 was too great for the country to hazard. This should have been
 the great foundation, the base line of the plan of the campaign.
 On this the country might have given a loose to all its exertions,
 with the consolatory reflection, that the greater its exertions,
 the greater its security, . . the more it made its preparations
 effectual to their purpose, the less was the risk at which it acted."

Mr. Windham then censured in strong terms the neglect of
 those opportunities which our command at sea had offered upon
 the eastern coast of Spain; "a coast," he said, "which was
 placed as the high road for the entry of troops from France,
 which was every where accessible for our ships, and which was
 inhabited by the race of men who fought at Gerona and Zارا-
 goza. Total forgetfulness could alone explain this most un-
 accountable neglect. But the great and pregnant source of

error in ministers," he observed, "besides the fault of not knowing better, was that which they had in common with many other ministers, and which he had signally witnessed in some of his own time, . . . that of mistaking bustle for activity, and supposing that they were doing a great deal, when they were only making a great deal of noise, and spending a great deal of money. They looked at every measure, not with a view to the effect which it was to produce abroad, but to the appearance which it was to make at home." He then spoke of the campaign in Spain more fairly than either party had ventured to represent it. "He could not," he said, "help perceiving in the conduct of this war, and certainly in much of the language held about it, a certain mixture of that error which prevailed in many years of the last, of looking to other powers for what ought to have been our own work. We did not set our shoulders to the wheel, as people would who estimated truly what the exertions of this country could do, when fairly put forth. In this point there was a want of confidence in ourselves; . . . in another there was a want, not merely of generosity, but of common justice toward our allies. There could be nothing more fallacious than to estimate the feelings of a country towards any cause by the feelings excited in that part of it which should be exposed to the immediate pressure of an army. If the scene of war lay in England, and we had an army of allies, or even of our own countrymen, acting for our defence, they would not be very popular in the places where they were quartered or encamped; and there would not be wanting complaints among the farmers whose provisions were consumed, whose hen-roosts were plundered, whose furniture was stolen, whose ricks were set on fire, and whose wives and daughters might not always escape insult, that the French themselves could not do them greater mischief. Now, if this were true, as infallibly it would be, of English troops upon English

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ground, might we not suppose that a good deal more of the same sort would happen when English troops were on Spanish ground, where every cause of dissatisfaction must be aggravated a thousand-fold, by difference of habits and manners, and the want of any common language, by which the parties might understand one another? It must be confessed, too, he was afraid, that we were not the nation who accommodated ourselves best to strangers, or knew best how to conciliate their good will: and when to all this was added, that we were a retreating army, and an army compelled to retreat with extraordinary rapidity, and much consequent disorder, it would not be surprising if neither we appeared to the people, nor they to us, in the most advantageous form. Nor were the inhabitants of the towns and villages on the line of our march to be considered as a fair representation of the feelings and sentiments of the mass of people in Spain. On many occasions the soldiers, at the end of a long march, had nothing provided for them to eat, and were obliged to help themselves. The inhabitants, whether they staid or had fled, had locked up their houses, and nothing was to be got but by breaking them open; and when once soldiers, whether from necessity or otherwise, began to break open houses, farther irregularities must be expected. Galicia was probably an unfair specimen of what was to be looked for from the rest of Spain; not so much from the character of the inhabitants, as from the state of society there, where the gentry were few, and of little influence; and where there was almost a total want of those classes which might direct and methodize the exertions of the lower orders. But to talk of the Spaniards generally, as wanting in zeal, or courage, or determination to defend their country, was more than any one would venture, after such examples as Zaragoza. A defence had there been made, so far exceeding what was to be expected from a regular army, that a general in this country would have

been made a peer for having surrendered Zaragoza, in circumstances far short of those in which its inhabitants defended it." CHAP. XXI.

There was an English spirit in this speech, such as might have been looked for from Mr. Windham: for if sometimes he seemed to delight in making with perverse ingenuity the worse appear the better reason, and treated as a sport for the intellect subjects which deserved a serious and severe feeling, no political views or enmities ever betrayed him into an unworthy act, or sentiment inconsistent with his natural generosity. The motion for inquiry was rejected; but whatever papers were called for were granted, though Lord Liverpool warned his opponents, that if they insisted upon making some of these documents public, they would perceive the impropriety when it was too late. They found in these papers what they wanted, . . . an assertion broadly made by Sir John Moore, "that the Spaniards had neither the power nor the inclination to make any efforts for themselves. To convince the people of England, as well as the rest of Europe, of this," he said, "it was necessary to risk his army, and for that reason he made the march to Sahagun. As a diversion," he continued, "it succeeded. I brought the whole disposable force of the French against this army, and it has been allowed to follow me, without a single movement being made to favour my retreat. The people of Galicia, though armed, made no attempt to stop the passage of the French through the mountains. They abandoned their dwellings at our approach, drove away their carts, oxen, and every thing that could be of the smallest aid to the army. The consequence has been, that our sick have been left behind: and when our horses or mules failed, which, on such marches, and through such a country, was the case to a great extent, baggage, ammunition, stores, and even money, were necessarily destroyed or abandoned." This was a heavy charge against the Spaniards, and it was triumphantly repeated by those who,

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*Sir John
Moore's
dispatches.*

CHAP. being the opponents of ministry, became thereby the enemies
 XXI. of the Spanish cause. Yet it might have occurred to them that
 1809. it was neither generous nor prudent to reproach an undisciplined
March. peasantry for not attempting to defend defiles through which
 the finest army that had ever left England, with a man who was
 supposed to be their best general at its head, was retreating
 faster than ever army had retreated before. If these passes were
 not defensible, why should the Galicians be condemned for not
 defending them? If they were, why did the British army run
 through, leaving their baggage, stores, and ammunition, their
 money, their horses, their sick, their dying, and their dead, to
 track the way?

This accusation against our allies the opposition had expected to find; but they had not looked for a heavier charge against the army itself from the same authority, . . . a charge too which, if any thing more than the consternation and flight of the British force had been required to excuse the Galicians, would have supplied it. For the General added in this unhappy dispatch, "I am sorry to say, that the army whose conduct I had such reason to extol on its march through Portugal, and on its arrival in Spain, has totally changed its character since it began to retreat. I can say nothing in its favour, but that when there was a prospect of fighting the enemy, the men were then orderly, and seemed pleased, and determined to do their duty." "Of what nature," it was asked, "was this misconduct with which General Moore so roundly accused a whole army, almost with his dying breath? Did the officers behave ill, or the men, or both? Did they refuse to fight, or did they refuse to fly? What had they done, or what had they omitted to do?" These questions were asked by the wiser part of the public, and the narratives of the campaign, which were afterwards published, amply answered them. It then appeared that the army, from the hour in which

it was turned into a rout, considered themselves like sailors after a shipwreck, released from all discipline by the common ruin ; . . that they plundered, burnt, and destroyed before them ; . . that while many of the officers murmured against the conduct of the commander, the men cried out loudly against the disgrace of running away ; . . that order, discipline, temperance, and even humanity, were laid aside by them in their desperation : but that they had never forgotten the honour of England ; and that whenever a hope of facing the enemy was held out to them, order was instantaneously restored, they were themselves again, and, in spite of all their fatigues and sufferings, manifested that invincible courage which, happily for themselves and for their country, they were allowed at last to prove upon the French at Coruña.

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Such consequences, however, humiliating as they were, were inevitable in a retreat so conducted. But Sir John Moore's dispatch contained a more startling avowal, for it was then first made known that he had been advised to propose terms to the enemy, that he might be permitted to embark quietly. It was indeed an unexpected shock to learn that there were officers, and of such rank as to offer advice to the General, who were for asking leave of the French to embark, and purchasing by such dishonour that safety which the army, broken-hearted as it was, without horse, and almost without artillery, won gloriously for itself. From this incalculable evil, this inexpiable disgrace, Sir John Moore had saved us. But who were the men who had so little confidence in British valour, that they would not have fought the battle of Coruña ? Who were they who, instead of relying upon their own hearts and hands, would have proposed terms to Marshal Soult, and set the Spaniards an example to which every traitor or every coward among them might have appealed as a precedent for any baseness ? This question was not asked in Parliament ; nor was any pledge required from Government, or

CHAP. given, that these men should never on any future occasion be
 XXI. trusted with command. Not a single remark was made in either
 1809. House by either party upon this subject, nor upon any of the
March. information contained in a dispatch which had been loudly
 called for as of such great importance. It furnished no matter
 of reproach against the ministry, and therefore it was not the
 kind of information which their opponents wanted. And mi-
 nisters themselves could make no use of it in their own justifica-
 tion, for, having it in their hands, they had passed a vote of
 thanks to the officers and men of whose previous misconduct
 they possessed these proofs; and instead of defending their own
 measures by arguing that the campaign might probably have
 turned out well, and beyond all doubt less disastrously, if the
 Commander had acted with more vigour and more discretion,
 they had asserted that every thing had been ably executed, as
 well as wisely planned.

*Mr. Frere's
 correspond-
 ence with
 Sir John
 Moore.*

Some matter, however, for accusation the opposition thought
 they had found in Mr. Frere's correspondence with Sir John
 Moore. They affirmed that the fatal event of the campaign
 had been caused by his interference, he having been the sole
 cause of the army's advance. To have his conduct fairly and
 impartially considered is what no agent of the British govern-
 ment expects from a party in opposition to the government, the
 just and honourable feelings of private life being so commonly
 cast aside in political warfare, that the wonder is when a trace
 of them is found remaining. But Mr. Frere was attacked with
 peculiar acrimony, as the intimate friend of Mr. Canning; this
 being motive enough for virulence when a spirit of faction pre-
 vails. He was charged in the most unqualified terms with folly,
 ignorance, and presumption; it was declared that his incapacity
 had given Buonaparte the same advantage as that Emperor was
 accustomed to derive from corruption and treason; and it was

announced that an address would be moved for his immediate recall. That intention was not pursued when it was understood that Marquis Wellesley would be appointed to succeed him in the embassy ; and upon every point except that of having desired that Colonel Charmilly might be examined before a council of war, his conduct was fully vindicated and approved by the ministers. In so doing they thought he had adopted an improper course ; but they proved from the documents which had supplied the grounds of the accusation, that Sir John Moore had not been guilty of the gross fault which his admirers, in their desire of criminating another, imputed to him : he had not made a forward movement which endangered the army contrary to his own judgement, and in deference to an opinion which he disapproved ; but upon his own plans, and in consequence of the information which he obtained from an intercepted dispatch.

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In the course of these debates Earl Grey complained that only 2000 cavalry had been sent to Spain, though we had 27,000, and though that description of force was peculiarly necessary in that country ; and he contrasted the conduct of the British government with that of Buonaparte, “ the consummate general whose plans they had to oppose. In rapidity of execution,” said his lordship, “ he is only equalled by his patience in preparing the means. He has all the opposite qualities of Fabius and Marcellus, whether you consider the country in which he acts, the people with whom he has to contend, or the means by which he is to subdue them. He rivals Hannibal in the application of the means, and is exempt from his only fault, that of not improving by past experience. The means provided by Buonaparte for the accomplishment of his purposes are so well combined, and his objects so ably prosecuted, as generally to give him a moral certainty of success ; and whatever may be thought of his total disregard of the justice of those objects, it is im-

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possible not to admire the ability and wisdom with which he combines the means of accomplishing them. In order to maintain against such an antagonist the ultimate contest which is to decide for ever the power and independence of this country, the true policy of those who govern it must be, to pay a strict attention to economy, to be actuated by a determination to concentrate our means, not to endanger them in any enterprise or speculation in which the event is doubtful; but pursuing the economical system of husbanding our resources, by which alone we could enable ourselves to continue a contest, the cessation of which does not depend upon us, but upon the injustice of our enemy."

Earl of Liverpool.

The Earl of Liverpool remarked, in reply, how singular it was that every one who censured the plan which ministers had followed with regard to Spain had a plan of his own, and that none of those plans should have a single principle of agreement with each other. This at least, he said, showed the difficulty which government must have felt in forming its measures, though it afforded a facility in defending them. As to the accusation of not sending a sufficient force of cavalry, he stated that as much tonnage was required for 5000 horse as for 40,000 foot; and moreover that vessels of a different description were necessary, of which a very limited number could at any time be procured. Yet from 8000 to 9000 horse had been sent, and there would have been not less than 12,000, had not the General countermanded the reinforcements which were ready. Weak as Earl Grey might be pleased to deem the ministers, they had not been so foolish as to expect that the first efforts of the Spaniards would meet with uninterrupted success; they were not yet guilty of calculating upon impossibilities; they had not supposed that such a cause as the cause of Spain, to be fought for with such an enemy as the ruler of France, could be determined in one cam-

paign. Reverses they had met; but those reverses were not owing to the indifference or apathy of the Spaniards; they were imputable to their want of discipline, and to an ill-judged contempt for the French, a proof in itself of their zeal and ardour. And what would have been the general sentiment in that country and in this if our army had retired without attempting any thing? If, when after all her repeated disasters, the spirit of Spain was unsubdued, and her capital bidding defiance to an immense army at the very gates; if a British army, so marshalled and equipped, and after a long march to the aid of their ally, had in that hour of trial turned their backs upon her danger, what would have been thought of the sincerity of our co-operation? "I believe in my conscience," he continued, "that that movement of Sir John Moore saved Spain. There are some, perhaps, who may be startled at the assertion: it is my fixed and decided opinion, and as such I will avow it. After the destruction of Blake's army, the defeat of Castaños, and the dispersion of the army of Extremadura, . . . after the capitulation of Madrid, which promised to emulate the glory of Zaragoza, and would have done so, had not treachery interposed; if at that crisis Buonaparte had pursued his conquests, by pushing to the southern provinces, the Spanish troops would never have had time to rally there. But that time was given by Sir John Moore's advance in their favour. Never was there a more effectual diversion. Sir John Moore himself said, that as a diversion it had completely and effectually succeeded. Nor was the moral effect of thus re-animating the spirit of the nation to be overlooked. Let the final issue of the contest be what it may, France has not yet succeeded in subduing Spain. I admit that Buonaparte has 200,000 men in that country; that his troops are of the bravest, and his generals among the most skilful in the world; and, above all, that he has been himself at their head: and yet, with all this, he has not got possession of more

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CHAP. territory than he had last year : he only holds such parts as in
 XXI. every war fell to the lot of whichever brought the largest army
 1809. into the field. I am far from saying, regard being had to the
April. man and the circumstances of the case, that the Spaniards must
 ultimately succeed ; but, at the same time, looking at the spirit
 they have evinced, and the actions that have happened, parti-
 cularly the defence of Zaragoza, I cannot feel lukewarm in my
 hope that their efforts will be crowned with ultimate success.
 In that fatal contest with America we gained every battle ; we took
 every town we besieged, until the capture of General Burgoyne ;
 and yet the Americans ultimately succeeded, by perseverance,
 in the contest. In the present struggle, do not the extent and
 nature of the country afford a hope of success ? does not its
 population forbid despair ? We have not lost the confidence of
 the Spanish people ; we know that every true Spanish heart
 beats high for this country ; we know that whatever may happen,
 they do not accuse us. Submission may be the lot they are fated
 to endure in the end ; but they do not impute to us the cause of
 their misfortunes : they are sensible that neither the thirst after
 commerce, nor territory, nor security, is to be imputed to us, in
 the assistance we have afforded to them upon this important
 occasion. Whatever may be the result, we have done our duty ;
 we have not despaired ; we have persevered, and will do so to the
 last, while there is any thing left to contend for with a prospect
 of success."

Mr. Can-
 ning.
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Mr. Canning also declared, that considering Sir John Moore's
 advance in a military point, in his poor judgement he could not
 but think it a wise measure ; but in every view which ennoble
 military objects by exalting military character, he was sure it
 was so. With all its consequences and disasters, he preferred it
 to a retreat at that time. Of those disasters he would not say a
 word : the battle of Coruña covered every thing ; but the retreat

itself, and the precipitancy of it, he could never cease to regret. This single expression was the only hint even of censure as to the conduct of the retreat which was heard in Parliament. In the course of the debate an extraordinary confession was made by Mr. Canning. “During the whole time,” he said, “that these events were passing, government had no means of arguing from the past: the occasion was without precedent, and such as it was impossible to lay their hand on any period of history to parallel, either from its importance with regard to individuals, to this happy country and to Europe, or the difficulty that arose from there being so little knowledge to guide their steps in the actual scene of their operations. Why should government be ashamed to say they wanted that knowledge of the interior of Spain, which they found no one possessed? With every other part of the continent we had had more intercourse: of the situation of Spain we had every thing to learn.” With what contemptuous satisfaction must Buonaparte and the French politicians have heard such a confession from the British secretary of state for foreign affairs! With whatever feelings the government might make this avowal, it was heard with astonishment by the thoughtful part of the people, and not without indignation. To them it was a mournful thing thus to be told that their rulers laid in no stock of knowledge, but lived, as it were, from hand to mouth, upon what they happened to meet with! Is there a country or a province in Europe, it was asked; is there a European possession in any part of the world, of which the French government does not possess maps, plans, and the most ample accounts of whatever may guide its politics, and facilitate its invasion? Even respecting Spanish America, such a confession would have been disgraceful, because it would have betrayed an inexcusable negligence in seeking for information; but as regarding Spain itself, it became almost incredible. Did there not exist faithful

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CHAP. and copious accounts of that kingdom, both by foreign and
 XXI. native writers? Had we not still living, diplomatists who had re-
 1809. sided for years at the Spanish court; consuls and merchants who
 May. had been domesticated, and almost naturalized in Spain; and
 travellers who, either for their pleasure, or on their commercial
 pursuits, had traversed every province and every part of the
 Peninsula? Was not information always to be found, if it were
 wisely and * perseveringly sought?

The truth was, that though we had means adequate to any
 emergency, troops equal to any service, and generals worthy to
 command them, Government had the art of war to learn: it had
 been forgotten in the cabinet since the days of Marlborough and
 Godolphin. The minds of men expand with the sphere in which
 they act, and that of our statesmen had long been deplorably
 contracted. The nation, contented with its maritime supremacy,
 hardly considered itself as a military power; and had well nigh
 acquiesced in what the French insultingly proclaimed, and the
 enemies of the Government sedulously repeated, that we had
 ceased to be so. We had been sinking into a feeble, selfish
 policy, which would have withered the root of our strength; its
 avowed principle being to fix our attention exclusively upon

* When Clarkson wanted evidence respecting the manner in which slaves were
 obtained up the rivers Calabar and Bonny, he heard, by accident, that there was one
 person who could give it, but he neither could obtain his name, nor learn the place of
 his abode: . . all that was known was, that he belonged to some ship of war in or-
 dinary. That indefatigable and admirable man immediately set out in search of him:
 he went on board every ship in ordinary at Deptford, Woolwich, Chatham, and Sheer-
 ness, . . above an hundred and sixty vessels, . . but in vain. He boarded above an
 hundred more at Portsmouth, equally in vain, and fifty-six at Plymouth, with as little
 success. In the fifty-seventh he found his man, after a labour of three weeks; obtained
 the knowledge which he wanted; and established by that evidence a point of main
 importance to the abolition of the slave trade.

what were called British objects ; in other words, to pursue what was gainful, and be satisfied with present safety, regardless of honour, and of the certain ruin which that regardlessness must bring on. The events in Spain had roused the country from a lethargy which otherwise might have proved fatal ; and ministers, as undoubtedly the better part of their opponents would have done had they been then in office, heartily participated the national feeling : but when vigorous measures were required, they found themselves without precedent and without system. They had entered, however, into the contest generously and magnanimously, with a spirit which, if it were sustained, would rectify the errors of inexperience, and work its way through all difficulties.

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Earl Grey took occasion in one of his speeches to notice an opinion, that it was of no consequence by which party the administration of affairs was directed. "How can it," he asked, "be seriously urged, that it is the same thing whether the government be entrusted to incapable persons, or able statesmen ? I am really astonished at the absurd extravagance of the doctrine into which men of general good sense and good intentions have been recently betrayed upon this subject." But no person had ever pretended that it was the same thing whether the government were administered by weak heads or by wise ones. What had been maintained was, that the party out of place was in no respect better than the party in, and in many respects worse : that they did not possess the slightest superiority in talents ; that a comparison of principles was wholly to their disadvantage ; and that the language respecting the present contest held, even by those among them whose attachment to the institutions of their country could not be doubted, was such as left no hope for the honour of England if it were committed to their hands. The existing ministry acted upon braver and wiser principles,

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CHAP. and, whatever errors they committed in the management of the
 XXI. war, to the latest ages it will be remembered for their praise, that
 1809. in the worst times they never despaired of a good cause, nor
 shrunk from any responsibility that the emergency required.

*Expedition
 to the
 Scheldt.*

An error, and one most grievous in its consequences, they committed at this time, by dividing their force, and sending a great expedition against the Isle of Walcheren, as a diversion in aid of Austria, instead of bringing all their strength to bear upon the Peninsula. It was a wise saying of Charles V. that counsels are to be approved or condemned for their causes, not for their consequences. When the causes which led to this unhappy resolution are considered, it will appear imputable in part to the conduct of the Spanish government, still more to that of the opposition in England. By refusing to put us in possession of Cadiz as a point of retreat and safe depôt, the Spaniards afforded their enemies in England an argument in support of their favourite position, that these allies had no confidence in us. The opposition writers did not fail to urge this as an additional proof that they were unworthy of our assistance; and the impression which they laboured to produce was strengthened by persons whose hearts were with their country, but who thought by heaping obloquy upon the Spaniards, and making their very misfortunes matter of accusation against them, to excuse the manner of Sir John Moore's retreat. To the effect which had been thus produced on public opinion ministers in some degree deferred. They deferred still more to the pitiful maxim that the British government ought to direct its efforts towards the attainment of what were called purely British objects: now there were ships at Antwerp and at Flushing, and it was deemed a British object to destroy the naval resources of the enemy.

Men in England regarded the commencement of the Austrian war with widely different feelings, each party expecting a result

in conformity to its own system of opinions. Those journalists CHAP.
XXI.
1809. who taught as the first political commandment that Buonaparte was Almighty, and that Europe should have none other Lord but him, as from the commencement of the troubles in Spain they had represented the cause of the Spaniards to be hopeless, so they predicted now that that resistless conqueror was only called a while from his career of conquest in the Peninsula to win new victories upon the Danube, after which he would return to the Guadalquivir and the Tagus, and bear down every thing before him there. Others, who had too sanguinely expected immediate success from the Spaniards, with equal but less excusable credulity rested their hopes now upon Austria, . . . there, they said, the battle was to be fought, and the fate of Spain as well as of Germany depended upon the issue. The wiser few looked for little from the continental governments, though they knew that much was possible from the people; but from the beginning of this new contest, it appeared to them important chiefly because it effected a diversion in favour of the Spaniards; especially they hoped that England would seize the opportunity, and by meeting the enemy upon that ground with equal numbers, secure a certain and decisive victory.

Great and unfortunate as the error was of dividing their efforts, the Government acted with a spirit and vigour which have seldom been seen in the counsels of a British cabinet. At a time when they expected that not Spain alone, but Portugal also, would be abandoned by our troops, they made preparations for sending thither another army with all speed, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, who consequently resigned his seat in Parliament, and his office as Chief Secretary in Ireland. Sir John Craddock, who had then the command in Portugal, being a much older officer, was appointed Governor of Gibraltar. The Earl of *Troops sent
to Portugal.* Buckinghamshire complained of this, as being an ill reward for *Earl of
Bucking-
hamshire,
April 10.*

CHAP. those exertions in collecting the scattered British force, and pre-
 XXI. paring it for resistance, to which it was owing that the deter-
 1809. mination of embarking from Lisbon was abandoned. This com-
 plaint drew from the Earl of Liverpool a just tribute to Sir John
 Craddock's merits, and some remarks not less just upon the im-
 propriety of bringing such a subject before Parliament, as at
 once trenching upon the prerogative, and virtually destroying
 that responsibility which ministers possessed.

May 1.

Lord Buckinghamshire was of opinion that we had acted
 unwisely in reinstating the Portuguese Regency ; that it became
 the duty of ministers to form a provisional government in that
 country till the subject could be submitted to the Prince of Bra-
 zil's decision ; and that when Marquis Wellesley went out as
 ambassador to Seville, he should take with him powers for making
 those changes in Portugal which could not be delayed without
 most serious injury to the common cause of that kingdom and
 of Spain, and to the security of Great Britain and Ireland. To
 this it was replied, that what had been done was done because
 it was presumed to be most in accord with the sentiments of the
 government in Brazil, at the same time that due regard was paid
 to the feelings and even the prejudices of the people. Lord
 Buckinghamshire strongly recommended that we should avail
 ourselves of the strength of Portugal as a military position, and
 of the excellent qualities of the Portuguese, which, under good
 discipline, whenever they had had it, made them among the best
 soldiers in the world. Such measures for that great purpose had
 at that time been taken as the Earl of Buckinghamshire wished.
 That nobleman spoke more wisely upon the affairs of the Pen-
 insula than any other member of the opposition, and without
 the slightest taint of party spirit. There were some, of whom it
 would be difficult to say whether their speeches displayed less
 knowledge of facts, or less regard of them.

CHAPTER XXII.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY'S SECOND CAMPAIGN IN PORTUGAL.
 PASSAGE OF THE DOURO, AND EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH.
 DELIVERANCE OF GALICIA.

THERE were members who boldly asserted in Parliament 1809. that the Portugeze did not like the English. A more groundless assertion has seldom been hazarded there. The connexion between England and Portugal was not an ordinary one, built upon immediate interests, and liable to change with the chance of circumstances. There were nations with whom, during the long struggle against Buonaparte, we were in league one day, and at war the next, the hostility being without anger, and the alliance without esteem. Our friendship with Portugal was like our enmity to France, founded upon something deeper. From the day when Portugal first became a kingdom, with the exception of that unfortunate period when the Philips usurped its crown, England had been its tried and faithful friend. When Lisbon was conquered from the Moors, English crusaders assisted at the siege; . . English archers contributed to the victory of Aljubarrota, which effected the first deliverance of Portugal from Castile; . . an Englishwoman, a Plantagenet, was the mother of that Prince Henry, whose name will for ever remain conspicuous in the history of the world; . . the Braganzan family, when it recovered its rights, applied, and not in vain, to its hereditary ally; . . and when Lisbon was visited by the tremendous earthquake of 1755, money was immediately voted by the English parliament for the relief of the Portugeze people;

*Feelings of
the Portu-
gueze to-
ward the
English.*

CHAP. and ships laden with provisions were dispatched to them in a
 XXII. time of scarcity at home *. These things are not forgotten . . if
 1809. there be a country in the world where the character of the
 English is understood, and England is loved as well as respected,
 it is Portugal. The face of its rudest mountaineer brightens
 when he hears that it is an Englishman who accosts him ; and
 he tells the traveller that the English and the Portuguese were
 always . . always friends.

*Sir A. Wel-
 lesley's in-
 structions.*

That old and honourable friendship was now once more to
 be tried and approved. An expedition sailed in March for Por-
 tugal. The commander's instructions were, in case he should
 find that Lisbon had been evacuated by the British troops, to
 proceed to Cadiz, and land the army there, if the government
 would admit them into the garrison. Mr. Canning stated in his
 advice to Mr. Frere, that the delicacy of this point was felt and
 acknowledged, and the former refusal had been received without
 the least resentment or surprise. But circumstances were now
 materially changed. The security of Cadiz was impaired while
 the French possessed Portugal, and it was thought advisable to
 give the Junta one more opportunity of reconsidering the ques-
 tion. Permission would now undoubtedly have been granted
 had it been required ; fortunately it was not needed.

*General Be-
 resford ap-
 pointed
 commander-
 in-chief of
 the Portu-
 guese army.*

The Prince of Brazil, perceiving the necessity of forming an
 efficient Portuguese army, and the impossibility of remedying the
 old and inveterate evils which had ruined the existing establish-
 ment, without the assistance of officers trained in a better school,
 had appointed General Beresford commander-in-chief with the
 rank of Marshal. Immediately upon taking the command that
 General published an address to the army, saying that no person

* While the Americans carried over ready-built houses for sale ; and the French
 sent a frigate, by which the *Grand Monarque* expressed his condolence for what had
 happened, and requested to know if he could be of any use.

had studied the disposition and military character of the nation more than himself, and that no one could be more thoroughly convinced of the good qualities of the Portuguese soldiers, who were now what they always had been, if not the best in Europe, equal to the bravest. His care would be to give their qualities that efficiency which could only be derived from discipline. They were loyal to their Prince, obedient to the legitimate authorities who represented him, patient under privations, and they had recently given proofs of patriotism, energy, and enthusiasm worthy of their illustrious ancestors. He was proud, therefore, of identifying himself with such a people: he was now a Portuguese officer, and he pledged himself that desert should be the only passport to his favour, and that he would avail himself of every occasion for promoting the comfort, honour, and advantage both of the officers and men.

CHAP.
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1809.

The Portuguese army was indeed in the most deplorable state; but Marshal Beresford, in appealing to the national pride, did not exaggerate the good points of the national character; and had it been as easy in an army which had been so long and so thoroughly debased to form good officers as good men, his task would not have been difficult. With the aid of a certain number of British officers, who volunteered into that service, retaining their rank in their own, he commenced the task with indefatigable zeal. The capture of Porto excited great alarm in Lisbon, which was increased when the refugees from that unfortunate city arrived, and related the horrors that had been committed there. The spirits of the people, however, were encouraged by the expectation of British aid, confirmed by a well-timed order of Sir John Craddock's for the army to advance, giving proof thereby of a determination to defend the country, and of confidence in the means for defending it. The reinforcement which had arrived rendered his force respectable, and he

*He begins to
reform the
army.*

CHAP. collected part in front of Santarem, and part upon the road to
XXII. Coimbra, to be ready either against Soult or Victor, on which-
1809. ever side the attack might be made. Beresford announced the
April. fall of Porto in his general orders, and took that opportunity of
April 8. delivering a wholesome monition to the army. "Porto," he said,
"defended by four-and-twenty thousand men, and two hundred
pieces of artillery, had fallen an easy conquest, notwithstanding
both the people and the troops were brave and loyal, because
the enemy had been able to produce a general insubordination
under the appearance of patriotism." He warned them against
the French partizans; whatever reports such men propagated
were to be received with distrust, seeing they were undoubtedly
paid by the enemy to promote confusion and distrust. "Let the
troops," he pursued, "be subordinate to their officers; let them
observe strict discipline, and the country will have nothing to
fear. The enemy is in possession of Porto; so he was of Chaves;
but that place he has lost with more than 1500 men. Recollect,
soldiers, that when General Silveira saw the necessity of retiring
from Chaves, where, from the nature and number of his forces,
he was incapable of resisting the French, there were pretended
patriots who raised a cry of treason against him, and induced a
great number of the despisers of discipline to attempt the defence
of that place, which they surrendered without firing a gun, and
the troops with it, who had been deceived by them. The firm-
ness of the General saved the rest of the army, and placed it in
a situation to acquire greater glory, and merit the thanks of his
country. The Marshal," he concluded, "cannot sufficiently
warn the people and the troops against those who, while they
assume the appearance of patriotism, are in reality leaders of
sedition; nor can he sufficiently recommend union and con-
fidence, for every thing may be hoped from the loyalty, valour,
and enthusiasm which animate the Portuguese in defence of their

country." And he assured them that he should always inform them of the disasters which might occur, as well as of the successes, being convinced that their zeal would be in proportion with the services which might be required, and that they would display a courage equal to the exigency of the times, and worthy of the Portuguese character.

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1809.
April.

Marshal Beresford soon had occasion to announce something more encouraging. Troops were marched from Spain to be employed in the war against Austria; they knew not whither they were going till they had left the Peninsula, nor even that a continental war had recommenced, so completely had the all-pervading despotism of the French government cut off all private intelligence, as well as withheld all public. The commanders alone were of necessity made acquainted with the real state of affairs, and Beresford now published an intercepted letter from Kellermann to Soult, communicating this news. The war in Germany, said he, produced by the intrigues and gold of England, renders our situation extremely critical. Such he represented his own situation to be, in what he called Upper Spain, where he occupied the plain country with a considerable cavalry force, watching the Asturian army and Romana, and doing all he could to keep down the people between Valladolid and Madrid. He told Soult that he could expect no reinforcement unless it were from Marshal Ney, of whose ability to co-operate with him Kellermann could not judge, not having any communication with him, because the whole of Galicia was in a state of insurrection. Marshal Soult was at this time spreading a report that Buonaparte was about to arrive at the head of 80,000 men. Thus it is, said the Portuguese address, that Marshal Soult, who calls himself Governor of Portugal, endeavours to conceal their danger from the unfortunate troops whom he is sacrificing to the ambition of a tyrant. And when it is thus

*Intercepted
letter from
General
Kellermann
to Soult.*

CHAP. XXII. ascertained that a general publishes falsehoods in one case, his
 1809. army and the people will know how to appreciate his accounts
 in others.

April.

*Laborde
 sent to at-
 tack Sil-
 veira at
 Amarante.*

The French general at this time felt the difficulties of his situation, though far from apprehending as yet the vigour and ability of the enemy with whom he was soon to contend. His immediate object was to open a communication with Lapisse and Victor, and this was not possible while Trant defended the Vouga, and Silveira the Tamega. The latter enemy, who was near enough to disquiet him, had broken down all the bridges over that river except at Amarante. Laborde was sent against him with a considerable force; he had Loison's division together with his own, and was to be joined by Lahoussaye's. Silveira, in advancing to Penafiel, had supposed that Soult, instead of tarrying at Porto, would have marched upon Lisbon without delay; in which case he would have entered Porto, and, by occupying the Douro, have effectually excluded the enemy from the province between the rivers. Upon the approach of this force he withdrew to the Campo de Manhufe. When the enemy entered Penafiel the scene was such as to make them sensible how deep was the feeling of abhorrence which they had excited and deserved. The whole city was deserted; all food and every thing that could have been serviceable to the invaders had been either carried away or destroyed. Every house had been left open; the churches alone were closed, that the Portuguese might not seem to have left them open to pollution. The very silence of the streets was awful, broken only when the clocks struck; and now and then by the howling of some of those dogs who, though living, as in other Portuguese towns, without an owner, felt a sense of desertion when they missed the accustomed presence of men. The royal arms upon the public buildings had been covered with black crape, to indicate that in

*State of
 Penafiel
 when the
 French en-
 tered.*

the absence of the Braganza family Portugal was as a widow. Of the whole population one old man was the only living soul who remained in the town. Being in extreme old age, he was either unable to endure the fatigue of flight, or desirous of ending his days in a manner which he would have regarded as a religious martyrdom; he placed himself, therefore, on a stone seat in the market-place; there the French found him in the act of prayer, while the unsuppressed expression of his strong features and fiery eye told them in a language not to be misunderstood that part of his prayer was for God's vengeance upon the invaders of his country. This was in the true spirit of his nation: and that spirit was now in full action. It had reached all ranks and classes. The man of letters had left his beloved studies, the monk his cloister; even women forsook that retirement which is every where congenial to the sex, and belongs there to the habits of the people. But it was not surprising that in a warfare where women were not spared, they should take part. Nuns had been seen working at that battery which defeated the French in their attempt at crossing the Minho; and here a beautiful lady, whose abode was near Penafiel, had raised some hundred followers; and in the sure war of destruction which they were carrying on, encouraged them, sword in hand, by her exhortations and her example.

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XXII.
1809.
April.

Naylies,
102.

Naylies,
107.

After some skirmishing for two days, Silveira, understanding that a division of the enemy was moving from Guimaraens to take him in the rear, and place him thus between two fires, gave orders for retiring to Amarante, and there defending the passage of the bridge. Antiquaries have maintained that this bridge was the work of Trajan; but a tradition too long established, and too fondly believed to be shaken by any historical arguments, has ascribed its foundation to St. Gonçalo de Amarante, a Saint, who, having taken up his abode there in a hermit-

*The bridge
of Amarante
April 18.*

CHAP. age, and commiserating the numerous accidents which happened
 XXII. in passing the river, determined to build a bridge. The alms
 1809. which he obtained would have fallen short of the necessary
 April. charges for feeding his workmen, if the Saint had had no other
 resources; he, however, by making a cross upon the water, drew
 as many fish to his hand as he pleased to take, and then supplied
 his labourers with a fountain of oil from the rock for the purpose
 of dressing them, and another of wine, that their hearts might
 be gladdened, as well as their countenances made cheerful. The
 bridge consists of three arches, the middle one being so large as
 to appear very disproportionate; but through this the Saint is
 believed to have guided with his staff a huge oak which the flood
 was bringing down, and which, if it had struck the pier, must
 have demolished it, . . a miracle so necessary, that he rose from
 his grave to perform it. Portugal has never been ungrateful to
 such benefactors: near as Compostella is, the shrine of St. Gon-
 çalo was preferred by the Portuguese to that of Santiago; whole
 parishes went thither in procession, and not a day passed in
 which some joyous party of devotees was not to be met on every
 road leading to Amarante, travelling with music, and increasing
 their noisy mirth by firing off sky-rockets in the face of the sun.
 It is the custom for every pilgrim to offer a small wax taper,
 and these tapers have amounted to more than twelve hundred
 weight on the day of his annual festival, at which sometimes
 more than 30,000 persons have assembled from all parts.

*Lieutenant-
 Colonel Pa-
 trick killed
 in defending
 it.*

The town, which contained about five hundred families,
 stands on the right bank, consisting chiefly of one long and nar-
 row street, leading down a steep descent to the bridge. Hither
 the Portuguese retreated: a retrograde movement, in the pre-
 sence of an active and adventurous enemy, tries the best troops;
 to the ill or the undisciplined it is usually fatal. Silveira's rear-
 guard fell back in disorder, . . the confusion spread, and the

enemy, when they entered Amarante pell-mell with their despised and broken opponents, thought themselves sure of winning the passage, and destroying a force upon which they were eager to wreak their vengeance. This expectation might probably have been fulfilled, if Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick, a British officer who had come out with Beresford, had not been present. Short as the time was which he had been with the Portuguese, it had been long enough for him to become acquainted with their character; and rallying a handful of men, who required only such a leader to be fit for any service, he posted himself at the head of the bridge. The example became as contagious as the previous disorder, and the Portuguese, who, despairing to maintain the passage, had begun to withdraw toward Mezam-frio, rallied and re-formed. The enemy persisted in the attack, knowing the importance of the passage; but the defendants stood their ground, and actually entrenched themselves in the street with the dead bodies of their enemies; they occupied the houses also, and the Convent of St. Gonçalo, one of the finest which the Dominicans possessed in that kingdom; and from thence they kept up a most destructive fire, till the enemy were driven out of the town with considerable loss. But Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick received several wounds, was carried off exhausted with loss of blood, and died within a few days, after having performed a service for which it is to be hoped a monument will one day be erected to his memory on the spot.

The French set fire to the town before they abandoned it. On the following day, having been joined by Lahoussaye's division, they won the Convent, after a brave resistance: they were now masters of the town; but the suburb of Villa Real, on the other side the river, was occupied by the Portuguese, who had barricaded the bridge, and planted batteries which

CHAP.
XXII.
1809.
April.

*The French
endeavour
to throw a
bridge over
the river.*

CHAP. commanded the approach to it. They kept up a fire also from
 XXII. some houses in the suburb upon those who approached to
 1809. reconnoitre, and killed, among many others, Loison's aide-de-
April. camp, and his chief officer of engineers. The loss was so severe
 in these attempts, that Laborde despaired of forcing the passage,
 and gave directions for forming a wooden bridge some quarter
 of a mile from the town. When the materials were prepared,
 the best swimmers from the different regiments were ordered to
 be upon the spot at midnight, as soon as the moon had gone
 down; but they found the water so deep, that no diver could
 touch the bottom in the mid stream, and so rapid, that no one
 could reach the opposite shore; this project, therefore, was
 abandoned.

*Repeated
 attempts to
 effect the
 passage.*

Captain Bouchard, of the engineers, who was present at this
 attempt, had been sent by Marshal Soult to form an opinion
 upon the spot concerning difficulties which both Laborde and
 Loison represented as of the most formidable kind. In recon-
 noitring the Portuguese works of defence from the church tower,
 which was close to the bridge, he discovered a string so placed
 as to leave no doubt in his mind that it was fastened to a trigger,
 which was to fire a mine and blow up the farther arch in case
 the entrenchments should be forced: at the same time he was
 convinced that there was no other possible means of effecting
 the passage than by forcing them. Ten days had been occupied
 in vain attempts, which had discouraged not only the men, but
 their commanders; more ammunition and artillery had been
 sent them from Porto, and another division was placed at La-
 borde's disposal, and positive orders given that the passage must
 be attempted and won, and the opposite bank cleared of the
 enemy. A plan of Bouchard's was then tried, against the
 opinion of the Generals, and the troops were held in readiness

to act in case of its success: this plan was to demolish the entrenchments on the bridge by four barrels of powder placed against them under cover of the night.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

April.

*Plan for
demolishing
the Portu-
guese en-
trenchments*

To call off the attention of the Portuguese guard, some twenty men were stationed to keep up a fire upon the entrenchments, so directed as not to endanger the sappers who had volunteered for the real service of the hour. It was a service so hopeful and hazardous as to excite the liveliest solicitude for its success. The barrel was covered with a gray cloak, that it might neither be heard nor seen, and the man who undertook to deposit it in its place wore a cloak of the same colour. The clear moonlight was favourable to the adventure, by the blackness of the shadow which the parapet on one side produced. In that line of darkness the sapper crept along at full length, pushing the barrel before him with his head, and guiding it with his hands. His instructions were to stop if he heard the slightest movement on the Portuguese side; and a string was fastened to one of his feet, by which the French were enabled to know how far he had advanced, and to communicate with him. Having placed the barrel, and uncovered that part where it was to be kindled, he returned with the same caution. Four barrels, one after the other, were thus arranged without alarming the Portuguese. The fourth adventurer had not the same command of himself as his predecessors had evinced. Possessed either with fear, or with premature exultation, as soon as he had deposited the barrel in its place, instead of making his way back slowly and silently along the line of shadow, he rose and ran along the middle of the bridge in the moonlight. He was seen, fired at, and shot in the thigh. But the Portuguese did not take the alarm as they ought to have done;... they kept up a fire upon the entrance of the bridge, and made no attempt to discover for what purpose their entrenchments had been approached so closely.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

*The French
win the
bridge.*

May 2.

*Operations
de M. Soult,
209—222.**Situation of
the French.*

Four hours had elapsed before the four barrels were placed : by that time it was midnight, and in another hour, when the Portugueze had ceased their fire, a fifth volunteer proceeded in the same manner, with a saucisson fastened to his body ; this he fixed in its place, and returned safely. By two o'clock this part of the business was completed, and Laborde was informed that all was ready. Between three and four a fog rose from the river, and filled the valley, so that the houses on the opposite shore could scarcely be discerned through it. This was favourable for the assailants. The saucisson was fired, and the explosion, as Bouchard had expected, threw down the entrenchments, and destroyed also the apparatus for communicating with the mine. The French rushed forward ; some threw water into the mine, others cleared the way ; the fog increased the confusion into which the Portugueze were thrown by being thus surprised ; they made so little resistance that the French lost only nine men ; and Silveira, saving only four pieces of artillery, but preserving order enough soon to restore the spirits of his countrymen, retired upon Entre ambos os rios.

The advantage which the enemy had gained would have been great, if it had been earlier ; it was too late to profit by it now. Loison had been ordered to establish himself in Villa-Real after the passage should have been won, . . he only came in sight of it, and returned to Amarante. On the way the post from Lisbon was intercepted, and in that mail the intelligence which had been so carefully concealed from the enemy was found, that hostilities had recommenced in Germany. The superior officers knew now the whole danger of their situation, and began to think only of how to * secure the booty they had acquired by

* M. de Naylies says (p. 120), *J'ai vu compromettre le salut d'une troupe, pour sauver le fruit des concussions et du pillage.*

such flagitious means. The soldiers partook the spirit of their leaders; . . they were now in fact a body of freebooters, retaining still the form, and unhappily the strength of an army, but with the feelings and the temper of banditti; and it was in vain for Marshal Soult, after the system of pillage in which all ranks had indulged, to appeal to any principle of honour, and call upon men to exert themselves for the good of the service, whose sole care was how to enrich themselves. Loison's division had to fight for the resources which were within their reach on the left bank of the Tamega; . . if they got sight of a peasant, a cry was set up as if a beast had been started, and they hunted him till he was slain. One Portugeze who was thus brought down among the crags by a shot which broke his thigh held fast his fowling-piece when he fell, raised himself on the other knee, and with an unerring aim killed a French officer before he himself was put to death. Another gray-headed old man, armed with a musket and bayonet, posted himself to such advantage among the rocks, that, refusing quarter, he wounded three men and four horses before he could be cut down. Every day made the French generals more sensible of the difficulties of their situation. In any other country, they said, with a fourth part of the means of every kind which were employed here to obtain intelligence, and without success, they should have been informed of every design of their enemies, even the most secret thoughts. All that they could learn now with all their means amounted only to the certainty that Sir Arthur Wellesley had arrived at Lisbon, and that General Beresford had begun to discipline the Portugeze army.

Sir Arthur had landed on the 22d of April. A general rejoicing was made for his arrival, and every town throughout the kingdom, where the French were not in possession, was illuminated three successive nights. The Prince of Brazil had ap-

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

Naylies,
117-8.

Operations,
&c. 229.

Sir Arthur
Wellesley
lands at Lis-
bon.

CHAP. pointed him Marshal-General of the Portuguese army, thus en-
 XXII. abling him to direct its movements, while Beresford was con-
 1809. tinued in the command. He would at once have proceeded into

May.

*He commu-
 nicates his
 plans to
 Cuesta.*

Spain, there in co-operation with Cuesta to have struck a blow against the French in Extremadura, had it not been that the part of Portugal which the enemy occupied was fertile in resources, and also for the importance of the city of Porto. Therefore he determined to drive Soult out of the kingdom, leaving such a force about Abrantes as might secure Lisbon against any attempt on the part of Victor; and he resolved not to pursue him into Galicia, because he was not certain that he should, singly, be equal to the French there, and because the appearance of a British army in that province would make the French collect their force, and thus suspend the war of the peasantry, which was at this time carrying on in a way that harassed and wasted the enemy, and materially impeded their plans: Galicia, he thought, might be more certainly and permanently relieved by striking a blow against Victor, than by following Soult. This plan he communicated to Cuesta, requesting him not to undertake any thing against Victor till the expedition to Porto should be concluded, when he would come down upon Elvas, and co-operate with him. Cuesta was not well pleased with these intended operations. Little or nothing, he thought, would be gained by driving Soult toward the Minho, for in that case he would be able to re-enter Galicia and complete its subjugation, neither the peasantry nor Romana being able to prevent him. "The object of Sir Arthur," he said, "ought to be to surround the French in Porto, or get between them and the Minho, so as to cut off the resources of Soult and prevent his retreat. But," he added, "the system of the British is never to expose their troops; and it was owing to that system, that instead of ever gaining a decisive action by land, they sacrificed their men in

continual retreats and precautions, as General Moore had done, for not having attacked the enemy in time.”

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In this opinion the brave but ill-judging old man wronged the English, as much as he underrated the exertions of Romana and the Galicians: and he recommended a plan which was impossible, unless Soult should remain quietly at Porto, and allow the enemy to get in his rear. Sir Arthur's plans were well formed and vigorously pursued, nor were they altered in any degree by the intelligence that the passage of the Tamega had been effected, and that Lapisse had crossed the Tagus at Alcantara to form his junction with Victor. He stationed two dragoon regiments, two battalions and a brigade of infantry, with about 7000 Portuguese under Major-General Mackenzie, to defend the fords of the Tagus between Santarem and Abrantes, and the mountain passes between that city and Alcantara. The latter place was occupied by 600 of the Lusitanian Legion, 1100 Portuguese militia, and a squadron of Portuguese cavalry under Colonel Mayne. In case Victor, now that the junction had been effected, should enter Alemtejo, which Sir Arthur thought was not impossible, he advised that Cuesta should follow him; but his opinion was, that the French in that quarter would make no movement till they should hear of Soult.

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Marshal Soult, in conformity to Buonaparte's system, had endeavoured to keep his army ignorant of the continental war. But copies of Marshal Beresford's address, which contained the intercepted letter from Kellermann, were carried to Porto by a brave inhabitant of that city, Manoel Francisco Camarinho by name, and means were even found of fastening it upon the walls of Soult's own quarters. This intelligence raised the hopes of those officers who, under the appellation of Philadelphes, had formed a plan for overthrowing the military despotism under which France, as well as her conquests, was suffering, and restoring

*Views of
the Phila-
delphes in
Marshal
Soult's
army.*

CHAP. peace to Europe. The restoration of the Bourbons made no
 XXII. part of the scheme, for the leaders had grown up in those re-
 1809. publican opinions which it is the tendency of youthful studies to
 May. promote, and which are congenial to a generous mind till time
 and knowledge have matured it. The end whereat they aimed,
 as far as they saw the end, was meritorious ; . . the means had a
 fearful character, such as is common to all secret societies, but
 which no circumstances can * justify.

* It is curious to observe in how many points this secret society resembled the system of the monastic orders. The person who was admitted to the higher grades changed his name, and was bound to keep a journal of all his actions, that the *Censeur* might at any time see what his moral conduct had been in all its details. *L'homme qui y était admis cessait d'être autre chose, au moins quant à ceux de ses devoirs particuliers qui auraient contrarié les devoirs de l'institution. Il sortait de la société générale pour devenir l'instrument aveugle de la société spéciale à laquelle il s'était dévoué, et cet engagement étendait son obligation bien au-delà de l'obligation de la vie. On ne crut pas pouvoir isoler le Philadelphie de ce grade par trop de moyens divers ; et le seul de ces moyens que je puisse écrire fut l'abnegation de nom. Il fallait un nouveau baptême pour un dévouement de sang. L'influence de ces noms était si puissante, qu'elle s'étendait visiblement sur la vie privée. Caton, Themistocles, et Cassius sont morts par le suicide comme leurs patrons.*—Hist. des Sociétés Secrètes de l'Armée, pp. 36-8.

The author of this singular history (who is no common writer) has a very proper note upon this part of the statement. *Il y a quelque chose d'effrayante dans cette idée, qui jette un homme hors de toute la société, et qui le depouille, jusqu'à un certain point, non-seulement de son existence civile, mais encore de son propre caractère, et de son identité morale, pour le modeler sur la vie d'un autre. Il ne me serait pas difficile de donner des exemples très-remarquables de la singulière influence que cette métamorphose exerçait sur l'esprit ardent de quelques adeptes, dans lesquels on voyait s'opérer une véritable métempsychose historique. Mais il est naturel de conclure aussi, de ces simples aperçus, qu'une institution pareille entraînerait quelques inconvénients dans l'état ordinaire et naturel de la société. Tout ce que tend à isoler les citoyens de l'ordre des choses dans lequel le hasard de leur naissance les a placés, pour les transporter dans un ordre factice et idéal, ne saurait être évité avec trop de soin.*—Hist. des Soc. Sec. &c., p. 180.

The founder and chief of the Philadelphes was Colonel Jacques Joseph Oudet, a native of the Jura, . . homme de vingt-cinq ans, ivre de jeunesse, fou de plaisir, incon-

The plan had proceeded to a great length in Soult's army, and some of the general officers were engaged in it. The more dangerous part was taken upon himself by the Sieur D'Argenton, who was then Adjutant-Major, and had formerly been Soult's aide-de-camp. It is one of the worst evils of revolution, that in such times good and honourable men are forced into situations

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The Sieur
D'Argen-
ton goes to
Sir Arthur
Wellesley to
explain
their views.

sequent dans ses manières, frivole dans ses goûts, créature légère, inconstante, mobile, qui paraissait ne devoir exciter d'autres soupçons que ceux d'un père sage ou d'un mari défiant, et qui tenait d'une main le fil des intrigues les plus vaines, et de l'autre celui des conjurations les plus sérieuses.—(P. 33.) The description of this person is so characteristic, that no language except its own could do justice to it. *La nature, en le formant, le destinait à tout ce qu'il y a de bon et de beau. Il aurait été à son choix poète, orateur, tacticien, magistrat: l'armée entière l'a proclamé brave; personne ne l'a égalé en éloquence; il faudrait l'âme d'un ange pour se faire une idée de sa bonté, si on ne l'avait pas connu. Jamais on n'a rassemblé des qualités si contrastées et cependant si naturelles; il avait la naïveté d'un enfant, et l'aisance d'un homme du monde; de l'abandon comme une jeune fille sensible, de la fermeté comme un vieux Romain: de la candeur et de l'héroïsme. C'était le plus actif, et le plus insouciant des hommes; paresseux avec délices, infatigable dans ses entreprises, immuable dans ses résolutions; doux et sévère, folâtre et sérieux, tendre et terrible, Alcibiade et Marcus.*—(P. 13.) *Oudet aimait les femmes avec fureur, les aimait toutes, les trompait toutes, et n'en abandonnait aucune de pensée, de souvenir, d'affection. Son cœur était devenu un abîme de tendresse, où se fondaient les sentimens les plus contradictoires. Il n'y avait pas un moment de sa vie où l'on ne pût lui tirer des larmes pour la première femme qu'il avait trahie; pas un où il ne méditât, peut-être malgré lui, d'en séduire une autre. Il était né Werther, et le monde l'avait fait Lovelace.*—(P. 17.)

The writer more than insinuates that Oudet, who was killed on the night after the battle of Wagram, fell, not by the Austrians, but by a premeditated act of Buonaparte. The fact is likely, and the fate not an unfitting one, . . . where life was the stake, and the game Catch who can. *Ses funérailles ressemblerent à celles d'Othon*, for some of his fellow-soldiers killed themselves.

But the most extraordinary part of the book is its brave assertion that the army never was the passive instrument of Buonaparte (which indeed in one sense is true, for it was always an active one); that it always detested his tyranny, and was the only body which restrained it; that the love of liberty and of legitimate rights always was cherished in it; and that the restoration of the Bourbons was owing to it:

CHAP. where nothing can enable them to act innocently and uprightly
 XXII. except that unerring religious principle which it is the sure
 1809. tendency and undisguised intent of modern revolutions to destroy.

May.

D'Argenton was worthy to have fallen on better times, for he was a man of kind and generous affections, at once firm of purpose and gentle of heart. When the French entered Porto, no individual exerted himself more strenuously in repressing the excesses of the troops; and many families in those dreadful days were beholden to him not only for their lives and properties, but for preservation from evils more dreadful than ruin and death. This officer undertook to open a communication with the British army, and finding his way to Colonel Trant's headquarters, was sent by him to Sir Arthur. Several interviews took place; and he went backward and forward by the French posts with such ease, and so little apprehension of danger, as naturally to excite a suspicion that he was acting under Soult's instructions, and endeavouring to dupe the British Commander. There were no means of ascertaining this; but the manner in which his overtures were received was that which would have been equally proper whether they were sincere or treacherous. He was assured by Sir Arthur that no change in the French army, either in contemplation or actually carried into effect, would induce him to delay his operations as long as it continued in Portugal;... he should march against it with equal activity whether revolutionized or counter-revolutionized. D'Argenton, however, well knew that if the army declared unequivocally

Je ne sortirai pas de cette question sans rappeler que c'est encore à l'armée que le bien-fait de la restauration est dû, puisqu'elle l'a appelée par ses vœux, secondée par ses efforts, par le concours des supérieurs, par le bon esprit des soldats, et qu'elle l'aurait opérée d'elle-même quelques jours plus tard. Il n'y a pas un officier Français qui en doute.—(P. 43.)

against Buonaparte, an arrangement with the British Commander must of necessity follow, and he asked for passports from the Admiral for the purpose of communicating with the army in Germany. Sir Arthur warned him of the danger to which he exposed himself by having such documents in his possession; but he was particularly solicitous to obtain them, and accordingly they were given him.

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May.

The movements of the troops, meantime, were continued without any reference to the politics or projects in the French army. On the 5th of May the whole of the British force which was intended to march against Porto was assembled at Coimbra. On the same day Beresford advanced from that city toward Viseu, with about 6000 Portuguese, a brigade of British infantry, and a squadron of British horse, to act upon the enemy's left, in the hope that he might so disconcert their plans as to make them retreat by Chaves into Galicia, rather than by Villa Real in a direction which would enable them to effect a junction with Victor. Trant was still on the Vouga, where the students had now the proud feeling that they formed the advanced post of that army which was about to deliver their country. He had taken measures for collecting provisions, whereby one difficulty that might have impeded the advance was lessened. A strong division under Major-General Hill proceeded to Aveiro, and there, in boats which Trant had got together for that service, embarked for Ovar, which is upon the northern creek of that singular harbour. The main body proceeded by the high road, and began their march on the 7th. They halted the next day, to allow time for Beresford's movements.

*Advance of
the British
army to-
wards Porto*

At this time Soult was informed that there existed a conspiracy in his own army. A general officer, to whom D'Argenton had just opened himself without being sufficiently sure of his man, gave the information. D'Argenton was instantly ar-

*D'Argenton
is arrested.*

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May.

rested, and all doubt concerning the truth of the accusation, if any there could have been, was removed by discovering Admiral Berkeley's passports among his papers. He was not a man who held his life cheap, for he had a wife and children in France whom he loved; but he valued it at no more than it was worth, and had made up his mind how to act in case of such a discovery. He avowed that he had been both to Lisbon and to Coimbra, and had communicated with Generals Wellesley and Beresford, who, he said, would in two days' time open the campaign upon the Vouga with 30,000 men. If the French army of Portugal would declare, what they well knew, that the Peninsular war in which they were employed was unjust, the British, he said, would unite with them, march in concert with them toward France, compel the different corps in Spain to join them, and when they had passed the Pyrenees, they would find there an expedition of 60,000 English. Officers would be sent to the armies in Italy and Germany, inviting them to follow the example, and an English ship would be dispatched to bring home Moreau from America, and place him at the head of the army and of the government. The English would supply funds for all this; and if Marshal Soult refused the splendid invitation to act the part which became him, the intention was to secure his person, and give the command to another.

*Soult pre-
pares to re-
treat from
Portugal.*

The principle upon which D'Argenton acted was that of saying nothing which could compromise his associates, and any thing that might assist their purpose. He was sent to prison, and two officers upon whom the Marshal's suspicions fell were placed under arrest. But Soult was alarmed, as well he might, by what he had heard; and though the general officers whom he convened assured him they knew of no discontent in the army, it was certain that all those who retained any moral or religious feeling, any respect for humanity and justice, any sense

of right and wrong, had abundant reason to be discontented with a service so flagrantly iniquitous as that wherein they were engaged. Not knowing how far he could depend upon the fidelity of his army, and certain that such of them as had been present at Roliça and Vimeiro had not forgotten the lessons which they received there, he thought no longer of conquering Portugal, but of escaping out of it without delay. He informed Loison, therefore, who was at Amarante, that he should retreat by that road, and so by Braganza upon Zamora; and he ordered the troops from Viana to march upon Amarante, by way of Guimaraens, while he remained at Porto to secure their movements.

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May.

*Operations,
&c. 239.*

On the day that this determination was taken, the British attempted to surprise the advanced guard of the enemy under General Franceschi. Some troops crossed the Vouga on the preceding evening, others during the night. They proceeded silently and in darkness, along rocky passes where there was sometimes room only to march in single file: but the fidelity of Portuguese guides was not doubted, and they were led safely to an open heath, where about sunrise they came in sight of the enemy's videttes. The French were not taken by surprise, as had been hoped, . . . they were formed in line with a pine wood in their rear; but they were beaten out of the field, and driven through the wood with the loss of their cannon; and having then to pass a deep ravine, the artillery came up in time to play upon their rear-guard. Such of the wounded as they were not able to bear away, the Portuguese peasantry dispatched, and miserably mutilated in their vengeance. The French had provoked them by their barbarous usage of the militia who fell into their hands, . . . for the peasants had found their bodies hanging there, and marks upon them of the cruelties which they had endured before death. The villages of Albergaria Velha and

*The French
driven from
Albergaria.*

CHAP. Nova, which the enemy had lately occupied, bore proofs of the
 XXII. atrocious temper in which this war was carried on by the in-
 1809. vaders. They had destroyed in mere wantonness and malignity
 May. every thing that was destructible, . . broken open every house,
 burnt the furniture and the thatch, staved all the liquor which
 they could not drink, slaughtered the cattle, and pigs, and
 poultry which they could not carry off, strewn about their limbs,
 and trampled them in the road. And in this manner they acted
 along the whole of their retreat to Porto. The inhabitants, who
 were thus reduced to ruin, welcomed the British with tears of
 joy as their deliverers, and followed them with prayers that they
 might overtake and punish these unprovoked invaders, who had
 brought such unutterable evils upon Portugal.

*Military
 Chronicle,
 vol. iv. 193.
 General
 Mackin-
 non's Jour-
 nal, p. 13.*

*They are
 driven from
 their posi-
 tion at Grijo*

The enemy retired first upon Oliveira de Azemeis, then upon Feira. On the next day their outposts were driven in, and soon afterwards the two divisions of Franceschi and Mermet were seen strongly posted on the heights above Grijo, their front covered by woods and broken ground. Here they were attacked by Brigadier-General R. Stewart; Major-General Manners, with a brigade of the German Legion, turned their left; they were dislodged and pursued till night, when the British army halted, their advance on the heights beyond Carvalhos, and the rear at S. Antonio da Arrifana, the former about seven miles from the Douro, the latter about twenty-five. The enemy continued their retreat, and having crossed the bridge in the night, set fire to it, and completely destroyed it. At daybreak the British troops were again in motion, in full expectation and hope of again bringing the enemy to action; but before they could be reached there was a river to be crossed, more formidable than ever general had attempted to pass in the presence of a respectable foe.

The Douro, which has the longest course of any river in the

Peninsula, and rolls a larger volume of waters than the Tagus to the sea, is about three hundred yards wide at Porto, its deep and rapid stream being contracted between high and rocky shores. Soult had prepared for leaving the city, but he did not dream of being driven out of it. Having stood upon the quay from midnight till four in the morning, and seen not only the breaking up of the bridge, but the pontoons consumed as they floated down, and having previously given orders that all boats should be brought to the Porto side of the river, and collected at one place, that they might be the better guarded, he is said to have supposed that the English would avail themselves of their maritime means, embark their troops, and attempt a landing near the mouth of the Douro; and in that belief he went to his head-quarters, which were between the city and the sea, expecting that he could remain another day in perfect safety, which would allow time for the movements of the troops from Viana. Franceschi was instructed to guard the coast with the rear-guard; Laborde was to support him; Mermet to station one brigade at Val-longo, and two at Baltar, and to have frequent parties on his right to observe the river, and destroy all boats that could be discovered. Orders were also dispatched to Loison, requiring him to keep his ground at Mezam-frio and at Pezo da Ragoa, to prevent the enemy from crossing at either of those points. Every thing was prepared for retreating, biscuit distributed to the troops, the money from the public treasury delivered over to the paymaster, and a battalion was stationed on the quay, with the artillery. But the French were so possessed with the notion that the English must make a maritime descent, that this whole battalion was stationed below the bridge, and not a single post placed above it.

Sir A. Wellesley knew how important it was, with reference to Beresford's operations, that he should cross the Douro with-

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*Measures
of Marshal
Soult to pre-
vent the
passage of
the Douro.*

*Operations,
&c. 241—
246.*

*Passage of
that river.*

CHAP. out delay. In the morning he sent Major-General Murray up
XXII. the river, to send down boats if he could find any, and endeavour
1809. to effect a passage at Avintes, about five miles above the city,
May. where it might be possible for the troops to ford. The Guards,
under Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke, were to cross at the ferry
below the city as soon as boats could be obtained, and he him-
self directed the passage of the main body from the Convent of
S. Agostinho da Serra, which stands in the suburb of Villa Nova
upon the most elevated spot on that side. It was certain that
the enemy would have taken all common precautions for securing
the boats, but it was equally certain that the inhabitants would
do every thing in their power to assist their deliverers. Two
boats were brought over by them to the foot of the eminence on
which the Convent stands, and two more were sent down the
stream to the same spot. There was a large unfinished building
on the opposite side, designed for the Bishop's palace, which
afforded a good position for those who should land first till they
could be supported; and some guns were placed in the Con-
vent garden, where they were masked by fir trees, in a situation
to bear upon the enemy with effect.

Four boats only had been collected when the passage was
begun; but more were presently on the way, for the inhabitants
were on the alert to promote their own deliverance. Lieutenant-
General Paget crossed in one of the first, and took up a position
with the Buffs as fast as they landed and reached the summit.
They were attacked in great force, and stood their ground most
gallantly till the 48th and 66th and a Portuguese battalion ar-
rived successively to support them. General Paget lost an arm
early in the action, and the command devolved upon Major-
General Hill. The most strenuous exertions were made by the
inhabitants for transporting the troops, while this contest was
maintained, in which sure hope and British resolution counter-

balanced the great inequality of numbers. About two hours after the commencement of the action General Sherbrooke, with the Guards and the 29th, appeared on the enemy's right, having crossed at the lower ferry; and about the same time General Murray was seen coming from the side of Avintes in the opposite direction. If any thing could be needed to animate the spirit of Englishmen at such a time, they had it that day. Hastening up the steep streets of Porto as fast as they could be landed and formed to support their countrymen, they were welcomed by the inhabitants with such demonstrations of joy as might have warmed colder hearts than those to which they were addressed. Handkerchiefs were waved from every balcony, and blessings breathed upon them, and shouts of triumphant gratulation and convulsive laughter mingled with the tears and prayers that greeted them.

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May.

*Military
Chronicle,
vol. iv. p.
28.
Stoithert's
Narrative,
p. 41.*

The French had been completely surprised. The very boldness of the attempt, for history has recorded no passage of the kind so bold, was its security; till they saw that it was accomplished they did not believe it would be attempted. A *chef de bataillon* told one of the generals that the English were passing, and his report was disregarded. Soult was assured by the French governor of the city that it was only some stragglers of their own people who had tarried behind till the bridge had been destroyed, and that the boatmen had gone to bring them across, but that he had forbidden the passage of boats on any pretext to the left bank. The Marshal was satisfied with this; and the report that the enemy were coming was not believed till General Foy, going upon the high ground opposite to the Convent, from whence Sir Arthur was directing the operations, saw the troops crossing, and Portuguese upon the walls making signals to them. In the confusion that ensued among the French General Foy was wounded, and narrowly escaped being taken, for the enemy

*Deliverance
of Porto.*

*Operations,
&c. 245-7.*

CHAP. thought only of retreating as fast as possible, when they saw
XXII. troops on either side arriving to support General Hill. It was
1809. about five in the afternoon when the action was terminated by
May. their flight. The British were too much fatigued to follow up
their victory that evening, when they might have completed the
destruction of an enemy not less thoroughly dispirited than dis-
comfited. But in the last four days they had marched over
fourscore miles of difficult country. So complete and signal a
success against an equal enemy was perhaps never before ob-
tained at so little cost; the loss at Porto consisted only of twenty-
three men killed, ninety-six wounded, and two missing, and in
the preceding affairs at Albergaria and Grijo of 102 in all. That
of the enemy was very considerable; they left behind them five
pieces of cannon, eight ammunition tumbrils, many prisoners,
and about a thousand men in the hospitals.

Porto presented an extraordinary scene that night; every
house was illuminated, while the gutters were still red with blood,
and the streets strewn with dead bodies both of horses and men.
There had been three hours' fighting in the suburbs, and before
night the French who had fallen were stripped and left naked
where they lay; . . they had their plunder about them for re-
moval, and they had provoked by the most intolerable wrongs a
vengeful people. Sir Arthur the next morning issued a pro-
clamation, requiring the inhabitants to comport themselves with
humanity toward such of the French as might be made pri-
soners; they were entitled to his protection by the laws of war,
he said, it was his duty to afford it, and it would be inconsistent
with the magnanimity of the Portuguese nation to revenge the
outrages which it had suffered upon unfortunate individuals.
He prohibited any person from appearing armed in the city,
unless he belonged to a military corps; and appointed Colonel
Trant to be commandant, provided the nomination should be

approved by the Portuguese government. D'Argenton* escaped during the night, as much through the good-will of those who guarded him, as by the services of his fellow Philadelphes.

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May.

On the following morning Sir Arthur commenced the pursuit, the Hanoverian Legion, under Major-General Murray, moving to Val-longo, from whence the enemy had commenced their retreat during the night, in the direction for Amarante. But Beresford had moved with more celerity than even the British Commander had relied on; driving back the enemy's posts at Villa Real and Mezam-frio, he followed up his success, and drove them from the left bank of the Tamega; and Loison, not venturing to defend the bridge that had been so gallantly defended against him, retired from Amarante under cover of the night, in some apprehension that Silveira or Beresford might have crossed the Douro, and that thus he might be prevented from rejoining Soult. The intelligence of the loss of Porto reached him about the same time that Soult was apprised of his retreat, and that the point which would have opened the surest way for escape was occupied by the allies. They met, however, within a few miles of Penafiel, and it was matter of

Soult and
Loison ef-
fect a junc-
tion on their
retreat.

* He was sent to England, and there with commendable humanity provided for by the Government; but soon venturing over to France for the purpose of bringing back his wife and children, he was apprehended, and shot. Nothing could be drawn from him to criminate any of his confederates, but he affirmed that Marshal Soult was engaged in the design; and this he had determined to do in case he should be discovered. It cannot be doubted that the intentions of this unfortunate officer were good; and that he was a man of good and generous feelings was proved both by his conduct at Porto, and by the motive which induced him to venture into his own country, under the certainty of being put to death if he should be recognized there. And yet he made a false accusation, and persisted in it at his death. The best and purest intentions will not preserve a man from guilt, if he engages in one of those secret societies where he is required to deliver his conscience out of his own keeping.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

Naylies,
123.
Operations,
&c. 249—
255.

Sir Arthur
pursues the
French.

May 14.

congratulation that the junction had been effected. Soult's determination was promptly taken. There were officers who were heard to say that the English treated their prisoners well, and that a passage to England in British transports was no great evil. Loison himself is said to have advised another convention like that of Cintra; but the Marshal well knew that the circumstances were widely different, and that nothing remained for them but flight, with the utmost speed, and by the most difficult road, abandoning every thing that might encumber them. As the treasure could not be transported, every one was allowed to take what he could of it; but there was too much haste and alarm for either officers or men to profit largely by this licence; some chests which could not readily be forced open were abandoned by the soldiers, and the greater number were so placed as to be blown to pieces when the guns were burst.

As soon as Sir Arthur was informed of the rapidity and success of Beresford's movements, he directed that General upon Chaves, to intercept the enemy should they turn to the right. Beresford had anticipated this order, and had already dispatched Silveira to occupy the passes of Salamonde and Ruyvaens; but the French were flying too fast for this to be executed in time. Their flight, however, was conducted with great presence of mind and judgement. Marshal Soult, when all his divisions were collected, made a display of them near Lanhoso, not to the pursuers, but for the sake of his own men, that they might see their own numbers, and acquire some confidence in their strength. Dispirited as they were by the abandonment of their artillery and baggage and the loss of their plunder, this had a good effect; and the retreat would have been honourable to Marshal Soult if it had not been disgraced by such cruelties as leave an uneffaceable stigma upon the commander of any troops by whom they are perpetrated. Marshal Soult's soldiers plundered and

murdered the peasantry at their pleasure : many persons, when the English arrived, were found hanging from the trees by the way-side, who had been put to death for no other reason than that they were not friendly to their insolent invaders ; and the line of their retreat might every where be traced by the smoke of the villages which they burnt. They suffered for this as was to be expected : whatever stragglers fell into the hands of the peasantry before the advanced guard could come up to save them were put to death with as little humanity as they had shown. Some of them were thrown alive amid the flames of those houses which their comrades had set on fire.

CHAP.
XXII.
1809.
May.

*Sir Arthur
Wellesley's
dispatch,
May 18.*

On the evening of the 14th Sir Arthur thought it certain, by the enemy's movements about Braga, that they intended to retreat either upon Chaves or Montalegre ; and he sent orders to Beresford, in case they should take the latter direction, to push on for Monterrey, so as to stop them if they should pass by Villa del Rey. At Salamonde the pursuers came up with their rear-guard, and drove them out of the town, which they had destroyed. The pursuers slept on the ground that night, and dressed their food and dried their clothes by the fires which the enemy had lighted for their own use. The sufferings of the French during the retreat were only not so severe as those of Sir John Moore's army, because it was in a milder season ; . . but it was made under a fear of the pursuers which the British soldiers had never felt ; the rain was heavy and incessant, and time enough for necessary rest was not allowed, . . their danger was so imminent. They who halted at ten at night were on the march again at three in the morning, and in the few intervening hours the cavalry had to seek both provisions and forage, and the infantry to provide for themselves as they could. The greater part of the men had nothing for eight days except parched maize ; very many died of want and exhaustion, and not a few lay down by the way to

*Sufferings
of the enemy
in their
flight.*

May 16.

CHAP. take the chance of life or death, as they might fall into the hands
 XXII. of the British troops or of the peasantry. Their track was strewn
 1809. with dead horses and mules, who had either been driven till they
 May. fell, or killed, or more barbarously hamstrung, when it was not
 possible by any goading to make them proceed farther.

*Loss of the
 French at
 Puente de
 Misarella.*

A bridge over the Cavado had been occupied by the armed peasantry, but mistaking some Swiss troops who were clothed in red for British, they allowed them to pass; but many hurrying over in the darkness, fell into the torrent and were lost. A greater destruction took place at the Puente de Misarella, a bridge with a low parapet over a deep ravine, and so narrow as not to admit two horsemen abreast. The enemy had driven away the peasants who were attempting to destroy it, but a fire was kept up upon them by others from the crags of that wild and awful pass; and upon the report of some cannon fired by the advanced guard of the pursuers upon their rear, the French were seized with panic; many threw down their arms and ran; they struggled with each other to cross the bridge, losing all self-command; and the British advance, when they arrived at the spot, found the ravine on both sides choked with men and horses, who had been jostled over in the frantic precipitancy of their flight. Here the papers of the army, and the little and more precious part of the baggage, which had hitherto been saved, were lost.

*Naylies,
 126.
 Operations,
 &c. 262.*

*The pursuit
 given over
 at Montalegre.*

May 18.

Marshal Soult was guided in this retreat by an itinerant Navarrese, who, in the exercise of one of the vilest callings (that of hangman alone excepted) in which a human creature can be employed, had acquired a thorough knowledge of the country. This man conducted him by cross roads and mountainous paths, where neither artillery nor commissariat could follow. Sir Arthur continued the pursuit as far as Montalegre, and then halted, finding that the enemy had gone through the mountains toward Orense by roads impracticable for carriages,

and where it was impossible either to stop or overtake them. He estimated that Soult had lost all his artillery and equipments, and not less than a fourth of his men, since he was attacked upon the Vouga. "If," said he, "an army throws away all its cannon, equipments, and baggage, and every thing that can strengthen it and enable it to act together as a body, and if it abandons all those who are entitled to its protection, but add to its weight and impede its progress, it must obviously be able to march through roads where it cannot be overtaken by an enemy who has not made the same sacrifices."

CHAP.
XXII.
1809.
May.

When the British Commander was commencing his operations from Coimbra, he received information from the Ambassador at Seville that a French division of 15,000 men had certainly left Aragon, with the intent, it was believed, of joining either Ney or Soult. It became, therefore, a grave question for his consideration, whether to return, in pursuance of his plan of co-operating with Cuesta, when he should have driven the enemy out of the north of Portugal, . . . or push with greater eagerness for the entire destruction of Soult's army, instead of leaving him to retreat, unite with Ney, and become again formidable by the junction of this force from Aragon. Upon mature deliberation he determined not to vary from his first purpose, because, though the intelligence was announced as indubitable, no tidings of this division had been transmitted from Ciudad Rodrigo, Braganza, or Chaves, quarters where it might have been expected to be known, and because his instructions enjoined him to make the protection of Portugal his principal object. If it were not necessary, therefore, to remain for that object in the northern provinces, he conceived that he should act in the best manner both for Portugal and Spain, by joining Cuesta with all speed, and commencing active operations against Victor. Thus he had determined before he advanced from Coimbra, and therefore he

*Movement
of troops
from Ara-
gon.*

*Reasons for
not continu-
ing the pur-
suit.*

CHAP. now desisted from the pursuit, satisfied with having done, if not
 XXII. all that he wished, all that was possible, and more than he had
 1809. expected. Had the Portugueze at Chaves been active in obey-
 May. ing their instructions, and occupying the defiles near Salamonde,
 the French, who had abandoned their ammunition and their guns,
 must have been irretrievably lost; the very cartridges which the
 men carried, and which constituted their whole stock, were ren-
 dered useless by the rain, and they could no otherwise have
 escaped the fate they deserved from the hands of the Portugueze
 than by surrendering to the British. As it was, they had lost
 not less than a fourth of their army since Sir Arthur attacked
 them on the Vouga.

Naylies,
128.

Col. Jones,
vol. i. 204-
7.

*Victor en-
ters Portu-
gal by way
of Alcan-
tara, and
speedily
retreats.*

If Sir Arthur had not made this previous determination, and if it had been possible for the commissariat, imperfect as it then was, to have kept up with a longer pursuit in a country which could supply neither food, nor carriages, nor beasts of draught, the tidings which he now received of Victor's movements would probably have recalled him toward the south. That Marshal, having been joined by Lapisse, had at length made the movement which Soult had so long and anxiously expected; he had broken up from the Guadiana, and marched for the Tagus at Alcantara. Colonel Mayne occupied this important point with 600 of the Lusitanian Legion, 1100 Portugueze militia, and fifty Portugueze cavalry. With this far inferior force he withstood 10,000 infantry and 1000 horse for six hours, and then effected his retreat without losing a single gun, though not without a heavy loss in killed and wounded, the Legion alone losing 170 men. He had endeavoured to blow up the bridge; the attempt failed, and the enemy, being thus masters of the passage, advanced a little way into Portugal in the direction of Castello Branco. But no sooner had Victor learnt that Sir Arthur had recrossed the Douro, than he retired by the same

course, evacuated Alcantara, and concentrated his army between the Tagus and the Guadiana, in the neighbourhood of Cáceres. CHAP. XXII.

When Soult's army had re-entered Spain, and found that the pursuit was not continued, their hopes rose, and they rejoiced in the thought of communicating with the other corps of their countrymen. The red uniform of the Swiss again led to a serviceable mistake, . . . they were taken for British soldiers at Allariz, and the inhabitants, under that delusion, hastened to bring them provisions and wine, blessing them as their deliverers. On the following day they reached Orense, and there learnt that the French in Lugo were at that time besieged, and that both Ney and Romana had marched into Asturias. 1809.
May.
Soult reaches Orense.
May 19.
Naylies, 132.

Romana, after he had succeeded in surprising the enemy at Villa Franca, had received information that Ney was collecting a considerable force at Lugo for the purpose of attacking him. Upon this he turned into Asturias, crossing the mountains at the passes of Cienfuegos, and descending upon Navia de Suarna; there he left his army under the command of D. Nicolas Mahy, and went himself to Oviedo, in the hope of rendering the resources of the principality more efficient than they had hitherto been found. The Junta of that province had received larger assistance of every kind from England than any other provincial government, and were said to have made less use of it in the general cause. They were accused of looking only to the establishment of their own indefinite authority, their own interest and that of their followers, and the destruction of all who were not subservient to them. Complaints to this tenor had reached Romana in Galicia, and he found upon inquiry that the greater part of the supplies which they had received were consumed in the support of idle and ostentatious offices; and that the corps which were raised, and which he wished to serve as a nursery for his army, Romana enters Asturias, and displaces the Junta.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

May 2.

*Combined
movements
of the
French
against
Romana.*

May 8.

drafting volunteers from them to fill up his regiments from time to time, were rendered useless by the want of capacity or conduct in the officers, who either remained in their houses, or did not support with any firmness the points to which they were ordered. Abuses of every kind were complained of in the misapplication of money, the disposal of offices, the contempt of public orders, the neglect of the laws, and the interception not only of private correspondence but of official papers. Romana was persuaded that these accusations were well founded; and by virtue of the authority of which he believed himself possessed, as Captain-General of that province, he dismissed the members of the Junta, as unworthy of their station, and nominated others in their place, among whom were the first deputies who had been sent to England, D. Andres Angel de la Vega, and the Visconde Materosa, now by the death of his father Conde de Toreno.

In consequence of this movement of Romana's, a combined operation was concerted between the French generals Ney, Kellermann, and Bonnet, for the purpose of cutting off him and his army, and subjugating Asturias. Proclamations in French and Spanish were printed at Coruña, wherein Ney assured the Asturians that almost all Spain had now submitted, Zaragoza having surrendered after losing three-fourths of its inhabitants, Valencia having opened its gates without resistance, and the Central Junta having taken refuge in Cadiz, which could not long serve as an asylum. He bade them rely upon his word, that their persons and their property should be respected, and prayed Heaven to enlighten them, that he might not be under the necessity of putting in force against them the terrible rights of war. Having sent abroad these threats and falsehoods, he, who had collected about 12,000 men at Lugo, entered Asturias by the Concejo de Ibias, a traitorous priest guiding him by roads

which were unsuspected because they were almost impassable. Bonnet at the same time advanced along the coast from the east, and Kellermann with some 6000 men entered by Pajares.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

*Romana
escapes by
sea.*

This was an occasion upon which the Spaniards acted with as much alertness as their enemies. Mahy was apprised in time of Ney's approach, and effectually disappointed one part of his scheme by returning into Galicia, there to profit by his absence. When the Marshal reached Navia de Suarnia he found the troops had escaped him; but deeming the single person of Romana of more importance than his army, and learning that he was in Oviedo, he hastened toward that city with such celerity, and by such a route (the priest still guiding him), that the enemy were in Salas and Cornellana as soon as it was known in Oviedo that they were on the march. Not an hour was to be lost. Romana sent the single regiment which was with him to join Ballasteros at Infiesto, withdrew to Gijon, and there embarked for Galicia with his staff and the Bishop of St. Andero. Before he had embarked the French had entered Oviedo; having pilaged that city, they proceeded to Gijon, but too late for securing the prey of which they were most desirous.

May 19.

But though Romana had been thus nearly surprised, the Asturians, under Generals Worster and Ballasteros, prevented the enemy from deriving any benefit from their transient success. Barcena, who commanded a division of the corps under Worster, by rapid marches upon Teberga and Grado, prevented the French from uniting their forces, and defeated them in three partial actions. Worster then collecting his whole army, advanced toward Oviedo; but Kellermann, perceiving that he could not maintain possession of the city, evacuated it in time, and retreated precipitately into Leon. Ballasteros meantime, who was on the eastern frontier of the principality, finding that Bonnet was between him and Worster, turned rapidly

*Ney returns
into Galicia.*

CHAP. upon St. Andero, chiefly with a view of drawing Bonnet out
 XXII. of Asturias. He attacked the French garrison in that city,
 1809. killed 800, made 600 prisoners, and won the place. The ill
 May. conduct of part of his army, which he had stationed in the
 passes near, deprived him of the fruits of his victory; they
 suffered themselves to be surprised by Bonnet's whole force;
 the remainder of his men in consequence had no other alter-
 native than to abandon the city and disperse, while he himself,
 like Romana, had just time to escape by sea. These move-
 ments on the part of the two Asturian commanders compelled
 Ney to hasten his return to Galicia, where indeed he rightly
 judged his presence was necessary. He retreated therefore
 along the sea-coast by Castropol, and found in that province
 intelligence of a nature which more than counterbalanced the
 temporary triumph he had obtained.

*The French
 in Lugo re-
 lieved by
 Soult.*

May 19.

Mahy, when he turned back from Asturias, hastened toward Lugo, where the greater part of the French then in Galicia had been left. At first the enemy despised his ill-provided numbers, and relying upon their artillery and discipline, went out against him; but having been baffled in two skirmishes, and suffered considerable loss at Puente-nuevo, where many of the Germans deserted, they were glad to take shelter within the walls of Lugo, which, old as they were, were an effectual defence against men who had neither scaling ladders nor cannon. There, however, he blockaded them; and the French must soon have been compelled to surrender, if Soult had not arrived to their relief. That commander, knowing their danger, allowed his troops only one day's rest at Orense, and hastened for Lugo, sending a detachment forward to reconnoitre the besiegers, and assure the garrison of speedy support. Mahy then, in pursuance of Romana's system, withdrew; but the appearance of the French was such, after the sufferings which they had endured, that the

garrison suspected a stratagem, and could not be persuaded that any French troops could appear in so miserable a state of clothing and equipments, till some of the officers were personally recognized.

CHAP.
XXII.
1809.
May.

The force with Mahy consisted of about 10,000 men. Knowing that the troops before whom he retired had been driven from Portugal, he counted with reason upon the speedy deliverance of the province, and withdrew toward Mondoñedo, to receive supplies and reinforcements, and be ready for acting as opportunity might offer, against Coruña or Ferrol. The remainder of the regular forces then in Galicia consisted of 8000 men at Vigo under Brigadier D. Martin de la Carrera, to whom Barrios had given up the command. That officer, as soon as he received advices of Soult's arrival on the frontier with the intent of joining Ney, took the field in the hope of intercepting him and preventing the junction. But finding when he reached Pontevedra that Soult had hastened on toward Lugo, and was two or three days' march distant, he perceived that pursuit must be unavailing; and resolving to profit by the time, he advanced upon Santiago to strike a blow against the French in that city, prevent them from joining their countrymen, and distract the attention of the enemy.

Mahy retires to Mondoñedo.

May 21.

The garrison consisted of about 1900 men and 200 cavalry. Aware of the approach of the Spaniards, and despising them as usual, they advanced to meet them on the Campo de Estrella. The Spanish vanguard, under D. Ambrosio de la Quadra, withstood them, till Morillo arrived to charge their right flank; the reserve came to the support of the van; Carrera advanced against them in front; they were twice driven from the positions where they attempted to make a stand; and a reinforcement of 800 men arrived in time only to share their defeat. They were driven into the city, and through it, and pursued more than a

The French driven from Compostello

May 23.

CHAP. league beyond it, till night came on : the loss of the Spaniards
 XXII. was 130 in killed and wounded ; the French had more than
 1809. 400 killed, . . they left only thirty-eight prisoners, of whom the
 May. most part were wounded ; but very many wounded were carried
 to Coruña. The conquerors did not fail to remark, that this
 success had been obtained on the day of Santiago's apparition,
 and on the field where his body had been discovered by the star
 which rested on his grave.

*Combined
 operations
 of Marshals
 Ney and
 Soult in
 Galicia.*

*Naylies,
 134.*

*Operations
 de M. Soult,
 276.*

This was the intelligence which Marshal Ney found when he reached Lugo on his return from Asturias ; and though Lugo itself had been saved by the unexpected arrival of the army from Portugal, the appearance of that army, and the recital of its adventures, were alike discouraging. The two Marshals had not parted upon good terms, they met upon worse, and the ill feeling that existed between them extended to their troops. Ney's soldiers talked of the Portuguese campaign in terms which provoked resentment, and quarrels arose, in which the officers took part. This, however, was no time for reproaches and bickerings ; all fear of pursuit from the English being over, a plan was concerted for destroying Romana's army, and recovering what had been lost in Galicia. For this purpose Ney was to act against Carrera and Morillo, and having defeated them, and retaken Vigo, to send a column upon Orense ; while Soult was to pursue Romana's army in the valley of the Sil, and disperse it, after which he was to march upon the Puebla de Sanabria, and there observe the Portuguese frontier, threatening to re-enter it, and keeping up a communication with Ney by Orense, and with the corps under Mortier by Zamora. In pursuance of this plan Ney hastened to Coruña ; and Soult, having been supplied from that fortress with field pieces and stores, commenced a pursuit little resembling that from which he had so recently escaped.

The day on which Carrera drove the enemy from Santiago Romana* landed at Ribadeo, and joined his army at Mondoñedo. Here he was informed of Soult's arrival at Lugo, and apprehending immediately that an effort would be made by the two Marshals to enclose him, he marched by the Valle de Neyra to Orense, and there took up a defensive position, covered by the Minho and the Sil. The Conde de Noroña, D. Gaspar Maria da Nava, had just at this time arrived in Galicia, with the appointment of second military and political chief, and had taken the command at Santiago: him he directed to withdraw from that city and retire upon Pontevedra, and he applied to Silveira for assistance; but the Portuguese general could not move without orders from Marshal Beresford. It was believed by the Galician army, that if the Portuguese had continued the pursuit two days longer, even without the British, Soult's men were in so helpless and miserable a state, that they would gladly have surrendered, Lugo must have fallen, and the remainder of the enemy have been shut up in Coruña. If the event was less advantageous to the common cause, it was more honourable to the Galicians.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

*Romana
rejoins his
army.*

Soult had remained eight days at Lugo, and had sent off for France 1100 men, who were completely broken down by the sufferings of the campaign. Still his troops were in such a state that when he reached Monforte it was found necessary to give them some days more of rest. They were in one of the finest parts of Galicia, and in the most delightful season of the year; but there was the dreadful feeling for those whose hearts were

*Proceedings
of Soult.*

* The historian of Marshal Soult's campaigns in 1809 describes Romana's *land journey* from the Asturias (p. 276) with a precision worthy of notice . . because it shows what credit is due to such a writer. My statement is taken from Romana's own letters.

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XXII.

1809.

May.

not completely hardened, that every inhabitant of that country was their mortal foe. Into whatever town or village they entered, not a living soul was to be found, except those who from infirmity were unable to follow their countrymen. They who had arms were gone to join the army; the others, with the women and children, had taken refuge in the wild parts of that wild region, and were on the watch for every opportunity of weakening their invaders by putting a straggler to death. During the five days that they halted, the French suffered considerable loss; and when they attempted to cross the Sil, they found it not so practicable for them to effect a passage in the face of an enemy, as it had been for the English at Porto. That sort of war was kept up which, under the circumstances of Spain, tended to the sure destruction of the invaders. The Spaniards never exposed themselves, and never lost an opportunity of harassing the enemy. They availed themselves of their perfect knowledge of the country to profit by every spot that afforded cover to their marksmen; and leaving their fields to be ravaged, their property to be plundered, and their houses to be destroyed, they applied themselves, with a brave recklessness of every thing except their duty, to the great object of ridding the country of its invaders. Wherever the French bivouacked, the scene was such as might rather have been looked for in a camp of predatory Tartars than in that of a civilized people. Food, and forage, and skins of wine, and clothes and church vestments, books and guitars, and all the bulkier articles of wasteful spoil, were heaped together in their huts with the planks and doors of the habitations which they had demolished. Some of the men, retaining amid this brutal service the characteristic activity and cleverness of their nation, fitted up their huts with hangings from their last scene of pillage, with a regard to comfort hardly to have been expected in their situation, and a love of gaiety only to be found

in Frenchmen. The idlers were contented with a tub, and if the tub were large enough, three or four would stow themselves in it.

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

May.

*Cruelties
exercised by
the French.*

The utmost efforts of the French were ineffectual against the spirit which had now been raised in Galicia. It was in vain that detachments were sent wherever the Spaniards appeared in a body: accustomed as the invaders were to the work of destruction, they were baffled by a people who dispersed before a superior force could reach them, and assembled again as easily as they had separated. The task of burning villages, erecting gibbets, and executing, as if in justice, such Spaniards as fell into his hands, was assigned to Loison, who discharged it to the utmost of his power with characteristic remorselessness. But it is not upon Loison, however willing and apt an agent of such wickedness, and however much of the guilt he may have made his own, that the infamy of these measures must be charged; it was the system of the French government, and the French Marshals had consented to act upon it; and that they were as ready to have acted upon it toward the British army, if fortune had enabled them, as toward those whom they called the Spanish insurgents, was evinced by their putting to death a handful of stragglers near Talavera, and by the manner in which the bulletins announced an act as disgraceful to the army which permitted it, as it was repugnant to all the laws and usages of war.

*See vol. i.
p. 745.*

While Soult was thus employed in the interior of the province, laying it waste with fire and sword, always in pursuit, but always baffled, and harassed always by a people whom his cruelty served only to exasperate, Ney proceeded to execute his part of their concerted operations, with a force of 8000 foot and 2500 horse. Upon his approach the Conde de Noroña retreated from Pontevedra to the Bridge of S. Payo, where, immediately after the recovery of Vigo, Morillo had broken down two of the arches,

*Defeat of
the French
at the bridge
of S. Payo.*

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

June.

and thrown up works for defending the passage. In this position, which had thus in good time been strengthened, Noroña resolved to make a stand for covering Vigo, from whence the Spaniards now received their stores. Boats were procured from Vigo and Redondela to form a bridge for the passage of the troops; enough could not be found to construct one in the usual form, and it was necessary to moor them broadside to the stream, fasten them together head and stern, and then lay planks along, torn from the neighbouring houses. The narrowness of this bridge considerably lengthened the time employed in passing, nevertheless the passage was effected before the enemy appeared. The troops were formed on the southern bank; they were now increased to between 6000 and 7000 men, besides 3000 who were without fire-arms; they had 120 horse, and nine field-pieces, and a battery of two eighteen-pounders planted on a height above the bridge. Captain M'Kinley, who was still in the port of Vigo, was informed of this on the evening of the 6th of June. Very early the following morning he went up in his barge to S. Payo, and while he was conferring with Carrera, the French appeared on the opposite bank. The Galician troops had undergone great fatigue, having been constantly exposed to continued and heavy rain: nothing, however, could exceed their spirit; it required all the efforts of their officers to prevent them from pushing across and attacking an enemy whom they had such cause to hate. Ney posted his troops in the houses on the right bank and in a wood a little below, and kept up his attack the whole day. During the night he erected a battery; some of his men also laid ladders upon the first breach, and got upon the brink of the second; but when daylight appeared they were soon driven back.

Captain M'Kinley passing safely within gun-shot of the enemy's field-pieces, returned to Vigo as soon as the action

commenced: with the assistance of Colonel Carol, he provided for the security of that place, and the Spanish commodore sent up three gun-boats to assist in the defence. One of these Captain Wynter manned under charge of Lieutenant Jefferson. A Spanish schooner and a Portugueze one went also upon this service. At daybreak the French battery opened both upon the troops and the boats; but the latter, taking advantage of the tide, got near, and destroyed the battery. When the tide fell, the enemy made two desperate attempts with horse and foot to cross above the bridge; the Spaniards steadily resisted, and both times drove them back with great slaughter. Baffled here, a detachment went up the river, thinking to cross at the ford of Sotomayor; Morillo was sent to oppose them, and after they had vainly persevered in their attempt for an hour and half, compelled them to retire. They made another attack under cover of a thick fog; this also was as unsuccessful as the former, and Ney being thus defeated by a new-raised army of inferior numbers, nearly half of whom were unarmed, retreated during the night, leaving some of his wounded, and 600 dead.

Marshal Ney had acted upon the same infamous system of cruelty as his brother Marshals. The peasantry from the beginning repaid their inhumanities: and although it was long before the Spanish officers could resolve upon resorting to the dreadful principle of retaliation, they also were at length compelled to it. It was not to be supposed that they could see their countrymen murdered without using those means of prevention and punishment which were in their hands. At Lourizon thirty religioners and forty-nine of the principal inhabitants had been hung by the French, who then set the place on fire: in return for this barbarity 130 prisoners taken at the Bridge of S. Payo were put to death. Barrios, while he commanded, had repeatedly remonstrated with Ney upon the atrocious system of warfare which he

CHAP.
XXII.
1809.
June.

The Spaniards retaliate upon the French.

CHAP. XXII. pursued; his representations were treated with contempt, and at length he executed the threats with which he had vainly endeavoured to enforce them, and threw at one time 700 Frenchmen into the Minho.

1809.
June.

*Marshal
Soult re-
treats from
Galicia.*

These terrible examples were not lost upon the enemy: if they did not make them abate of their barbarities, they made them eager to get out of a province where the people were able and determined to take such vengeance as their invaders had provoked. Marshal Ney indeed would have endeavoured yet to make a stand, if Soult would have continued to co-operate with him; but even if there had been no * ill will between them, views of more extensive measures, and necessity also, would have induced that General to form a different determination. He had received neither succours of any kind, nor instructions, nor even intelligence from Madrid for five months, so well had the Spaniards and Portuguese cut off all communication. There was not a place in Galicia where he could rest and supply his troops, or leave his sick in security, except the two great ports; and there he well knew they would be shut up between the Galician force and the English ships. He therefore refused to concur in any further movements, and began his retreat from Val-de-orras and Viana by the Portillas de la Cauda and Requejo to the Puebla de Sanabria. Ney, finding he was thus left to his own resources, immediately prepared to evacuate Coruña and Ferrol. He destroyed the magazines and stores of every

*Ferrol and
Coruña
evacuated by
the French.*

* The writer of Marshal Soult's campaigns loses no opportunity of displaying this temper. According to him (p. 290) Marshal Ney concealed the fact of his defeat at S. Payo, and assured Soult that he found the position of the enemy too strong to think of attempting it. He has so represented this as to conceal the fact himself, his book not giving the slightest intimation of an action that effected the deliverance of Galicia.

kind, and the defences on the land side, spiked the guns, and completely disarmed both the place and the people. Ferrol was evacuated by the last division of the enemy on the 21st, Coruña on the following day, and Ney retreated through Lugo, Villafranca, and Astorga. He had formed an encampment between Betanzos and Lugo; and this, before his final retreat was known, kept the persons whom he had established in authority in fear or hope of his return, so that no communication was suffered with the British ships, except by flag of truce. The batteries and lines on the sea-side having been left uninjured, Captain Hotham of the *Defiance*, impatient of this conduct, landed a party of seamen and marines, and dismounted all the guns which bore upon the anchorage. When Noroña arrived a few days afterwards, he expressed some displeasure at this; but the propriety of the measure was so evident when the circumstances which occasioned it were explained, that this feeling was only momentary. Captain Hotham having thus opened a communication with Coruña, sent Captain Parker to Ferrol, where the joy of the people, at seeing an English officer in their streets, was manifested by the loudest acclamations, and by every possible mark of attachment. The Castle of S. Felipe was still held by a traitor whom Ney had appointed to the command. He had under him a legion which the French had raised while they were in possession of the two towns, and over these men he retained his authority as long as the real state of affairs could be concealed. This traitor gave orders to fire upon any English ships or boats that might attempt to pass: Captain Hotham, upon this, stood over to Ferrol in the *Defiance*, and landed the marines of that ship and of the *Amazon*, with a party of armed seamen under Captain Parker, who proceeded to attack the castle. But though the men who garrisoned it had been weak enough to suffer themselves to be enrolled in the Intruder's

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

June.

June 26.

CHAP. service, they refused to obey their commander, now that it was
 XXII. in their power to deliver themselves, and joyfully welcomed the
 1809. English, who entered preceded by the Spanish colours.

June.

Marshal
 Soult com-
 plains of
 some of his
 officers.

The retreat of the French was conducted in what was now their usual manner. They are described by Romana as leaving every where marks of their atrocities, whole villages consumed by fire, victims of both sexes and all ages butchered, and committing enormities too dreadful to be recounted. The system had in reality been so wicked, that even some of the French themselves revolted at the course of crimes into which they had been led; and Marshal Soult, in a dispatch to the intrusive government, complained of what he called a moral debility in some of his generals. "In the kind of war which we carry on," he said, "and with the sort of enemy whom we have to contend with, it is of great importance to the success of our operations that the chiefs who are at the head of the troops should be not only impassible, but that they possess a force of mind which places them in all circumstances above events even the most vexatious." It was evident from this that there were officers who were shocked at the atrocities which they were called upon to order, and to witness, and to execute. The moral debility which was complained of meant a lingering of humanity, a return of honourable feeling, an emotion of conscience, a sense of the opprobrium that they were bringing upon their country, and of the guilt and infamy they were heaping upon themselves. For such a service officers were wanted who should be *impassible*, . . not merely unmoved at any effects, however horrible, of the system in which they were engaged, but incapable of any feeling whereby they could possibly be moved.

He recom-
 mends a
 plan for se-
 curing Ga-
 licia.

The dispatch in which this memorable avowal was contained was intercepted by one of those guerilla parties which now began to show themselves in different parts of Spain. It was written

from Sanabria, at a time when Soult was not acquainted with Marshal Ney's intention to evacuate Galicia. The war in that province, he said, was become very murderous, and infinitely disagreeable, and its termination was far distant. The only means of bringing it to a good conclusion would be to fortify seven or eight important posts, each capable of containing a garrison of 500 or 600 men, an hospital, and provisions for four months; by this means the people might be kept in check, the principal passes closed, and points of support provided for the columns acting in the province, in whatever direction they moved, where they might receive assistance and deposit their sick. This, he said, was a very powerful consideration; for it was not to be concealed that the present circumstances had a great effect upon the minds of the soldiers, knowing as they did, that if they were wounded or seized with fever at a distance from a place of safety, they were liable to perish for want of assistance, or to be put to death by the peasantry. A million of French money would suffice to put Galicia in this state of defence, and no money could be employed to better purpose, especially as a smaller number of troops would then suffice to occupy it. Lugo should be fortified, three block-houses erected on the line of Villa-franca in the Bierzo, and the fortifications of Tuy, Monforte, Monterey, Viana, and the Puebla de Sanabria restored, which might easily be done. A few other posts might be added if needful.

Some of these measures, Marshal Soult said, he had persuaded Marshal Ney to undertake. But when that dispatch was written Ney was on his retreat, and so harassed by the Spaniards, that he did not feel himself safe till he had got beyond Astorga into the plain country. Soult on his part proceeded to Zamora, and Galicia was thus delivered from its invaders. That kingdom was left in a state of dreadful exhaustion, and the anarchy

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

June.

*Romana
summoned
to take his
place in the
Central
Junta.*

CHAP. to which all things tended was thereby increased. Men who had
 XXII. done their part in driving out the enemy, having now no means
 1809. of providing for themselves, roamed about in armed parties, and
 June. lived as freebooters, so that the condition of the helpless inhabitants was little better than when they were under the French yoke. Romana appointed military governors in every province, and was taking measures for making its resources available to the general cause, when the Junta superseded him in the command. The pretext was that they required his presence among them; for upon the demise of the Principe Pio he had been chosen to succeed him as one of the deputies for Valencia, his native province; but the real cause was the complaints which were made against him by Jovellanos and his colleagues, for his interference in Asturias. Romana regarded not their accusations, knowing that he had acted with the best intentions, and believing that he had done what was best for the country: but he said to his friends that the Junta had never taken so false a step as in removing him at that time.

Before he left Coruña he erected a * temporary monument, in

* What he saw erected was a wooden model of what was afterwards to be executed in marble, with this inscription:

A LA GLORIA
 DEL
 EX^{MO}. SR. D. JUAN MOORE, GEN^L. DEL EX^{TO}. INGLES,
 Y A LA DE SUS VALIENTES COMPATRIOTAS
 LA
 ESPANA AGRADECIDA.

On the other side:

BATALLA DE CORUNA A 18 DE ENERO,
 Ano 1809.

Marshal Soult also ordered the following inscription to be engraved upon a rock near the spot where Sir John Moore fell:

the name of his country, to the memory of Sir John Moore and the brave men who had fallen with him. And he published a farewell address to the remnant of those faithful soldiers whom he had brought from the Baltic, and who had accompanied him through all his dangers and privations. "Neither the marches of the Carthaginians in former times," said he, "nor of the French in latter, can be compared with those incessant ones which you have made among the mountains of Castille, Galicia, and Asturias, during six months of nakedness, hunger, and misery. You have fought no boasted battles, but you have annihilated one of the tyrant's proudest armies; aiding the national spirit, keeping up its noble excitement, wearying the enemy's troops, destroying them in petty actions, and circumscribing their command to the ground upon which they stood. You have fulfilled the highest duties of the soldier; and I owe to you the reward, which all my labours, and cares, and thoughts as a general have aspired to. Your country was long ignorant of your best services; but the actions of Villafranca, Vigo, the fields of Lugo, Santiago, and San Payo, free you from all reproach for having avoided to engage in fatal battles, and will make you terrible to those enemies who have been conquered and driven out, wherever the superiority of their forces was not too great to be overcome. Brave Spaniards, I acknowledge this day the want of that composure which I have always felt at your head. I am no longer your General. The government calls me from you to take a place in the Supreme Central Junta. Nothing but its irresistible will should separate me from you, nor make me renounce the right I have to partake in your future welfare, under your new com-

CHAP.
XXII.

1809.

*He orders
a monument
to be erected
to Sir John
Moore.*

*His fare-
well to the
army.*

HIC CECIDIT JOHANNES MOORE, DUX EXERCITUS,
IN PUGNA JANUARIJ XVI. 1809,
CONTRA GALLOS A DUCE DALMATIÆ DUCTOS.

CHAP. mander. Take, soldiers, the last farewell of your General, and
 XXII. reckon always upon the gratitude and paternal love of your
 1809. compatriot and companion in arms."

*Address of
 the Central
 Junta to the
 Galicians.*

The Central Junta, upon the deliverance of Galicia, addressed one of their animated proclamations to the inhabitants. "People of Galicia, they said, upon seeing you fall into the power of the enemy without resistance, your naval ports and arsenals occupied by them, and so powerful and important a province subjected from sea to sea, indignation and grief made your country break out in cries of malediction and reproach, like a mother who complains to heaven and earth of the degradation of a daughter in whom alone she had confided. At that time reverses followed each other, as successes had done before. After the battles of Espinosa, and Burgos, and Tudela, came the passage of the Somosierra, the capture of Madrid, and the rout at Ucles, and then to afflict the heart of the country, the ruin of Zaragoza, the defeat in Catalonia, and at Medellin. In all these memorable events, though fortune failed, our reputation was not lost, and Spain, suffering as she did, retained her confidence. But Galicia... Galicia, entered without resistance, subdued without opposition, and bearing tranquilly the yoke of servitude, ... Galicia deranged all calculations of prudence, and was destroying the country by destroying hope. Who then in that night of misfortunes would have looked to Galicia for the first day-spring of joy? More glorious in your rise, than you had seemed weak in your fall, magnanimous Galicians! despair itself made you feel the strength of which you had not before been conscious. The cry of independence and vengeance was heard in your highways, your villages, your towns; the conquerors in their turn began to fear they should be conquered, and retired into their strong places; there they were pursued, and assaulted, and taken. Vigo delivered itself up with its oppressors, and Galicia, sending

these prisoners to the other side of the sea, gave a proof as authentic as it was great, that the Spaniards had not wholly forgotten the art of subduing and binding the French. This was the first day of good fortune that rose on Spain after five months of disasters, . . . others followed. In vain did Soult, hardly escaping from our allies at Porto, come with the relics of his beaten division to succour the weakened Ney. Harassed in their marches, decimated in their parties, cut off in their communications, and baffled in their hope of fighting great actions, these arrogant Generals despair of conquest, and execrate a war in which their men are consumed without glory. Weary of struggling against a physical force which every day strengthened, and a moral resistance which had made itself invincible, they fled at last from your soil in a state of miserable exhaustion, giving to Castille a new and great example that it is not possible to force the yoke upon a people who are unanimous in resisting it.

“*The Spaniards do not yet know what war is*, said those traitors to their country, who under the mask of a false prudence concealed their guilty selfishness. With such disheartening language they endeavoured to repress the generous impulses of loyalty. Base and pusillanimous men, we know what war is now! this terrible lesson is written upon our soil with the finger of desolation, it is engraved in our hearts with the dagger of vengeance. The execrable criminals whose instruments you have made yourselves have in their atrocities exceeded all that your perfidious mind could have foreseen, all that your terrified imagination could have foreboded. Transport yourselves to Galicia, if ye dare do it, ye miserable men, and there learn what is the standard of the true Spanish character! The blood which has there been shed is still steaming to heaven, the houses which have been burnt are still smoking, and the frightful silence of depopulation prevails over a country which was lately covered with villages and

CHAP. hamlets. But ask those families who, wandering among the
XXII. mountains, chose rather to live with wild beasts, than communi-
1809. cate with the assassins to whom you had sold them : ask them if
they repent of their resolution ; seek among them one voice that
shall follow you, one vote that shall exculpate you !

“ People of Galicia, you are free ! and your country, in proclaiming it, effaces with her tears of admiration and tenderness the mournful words wherein, in other times, she complained of you. You are free, and you owe your freedom to your exaltation of mind, to your courage, to your constancy. You are free, and Spain and all Europe congratulate you the more joyfully in proportion as your case had appeared desperate. All good men bless your name ; and in holding you up as a model to the other provinces, we regard the day of your deliverance as a fortunate presage for the country.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

CATALONIA. BATTLE OF VALLS. DEATH OF REDING. BLAKE APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND. BATTLE OF ALCANIZ. FLIGHT OF THE SPANIARDS AT BELCHITE. COMMENCEMENT OF THE GUERRILLAS.

THREE circumstances had materially contributed to the success of the Galicians : the aid and confidence which they derived from the British ships, whereby they were assisted first in recovering Vigo, and afterwards at the Bridge of S. Payo ; the rare virtues of Romana, whose single thought was how to serve his country, and who for that object shrinking neither from responsibility nor obloquy, acted always with promptitude and decision upon his own judgement ; and, lastly, the very condition, or rather destitution of his army : its name and presence had a powerful effect in rousing and encouraging the people, while the troops themselves felt and understood their utter inability for any other mode of warfare than that which their leader was pursuing, and thus derived strength from the very knowledge of their weakness. In Catalonia the people were not less brave and patriotic ; there was a stronger British squadron off the coast ; and the army was respectable for numbers, sufficiently equipped, and in a state of discipline not to be despised. But the Generals in succession were deficient either in military skill or natural talent, or that vigour of mind without which all other qualifications in a commander are of no avail.

1809.
February.

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XXIII.

1809.

*Proceedings
of the
French
after the
fall of Za-
ragoza.**Cabañes,
c. 14.**St. Cyr,
130.*

Neither in Aragon nor in Catalonia had the French been able to follow up their success. They had paid dearly for Zaragoza: even the army of observation had been so harassed during that ever-memorable siege, that it was necessary to allow them some repose. Having possessed themselves of Jaca by the treachery of the governor, and of Monzon, which was evacuated by the garrison because Lazan had taken no effectual measures for supplying it with provisions; they were repulsed in three attempts upon Mequinenza. They summoned Lerida, thinking to intimidate the inhabitants by the fate of the Zaragozans; but that example had produced an effect which neither Buonaparte nor his Generals were capable of anticipating; they estimated every thing by success, and with them to be unfortunate was to be despised and miserable. Marshal Lasnes was told in answer to his summons, that Zaragoza, unprotected as it was, had held out ten months against its besiegers, and that Lerida was a strong place. The Spaniards were also reminded that the Prince of Condé had been baffled before that fortress. It was expected by some of the Spanish officers that St. Cyr, in conjunction with the French from Aragon, would besiege the city without delay; that he would afterwards attack Tarragona, and then marching from conquest to conquest, proceed against Valencia. Others supposed, that for the more immediate object of securing the communication between France and Barcelona, his first measure would be to get possession of Hostalrich. Orders were indeed sent to St. Cyr to undertake with his corps the sieges of Gerona, Tarragona and Tortosa, at the same time; enterprises so much beyond his means, that the order made him doubt whether it was an error in the ciphers of the dispatch, or an act of folly in those who dictated instructions which could not have been obeyed without exposing the army to some great and inevitable disaster. That General had as little reason to be satisfied with his situation,

as with the cause in which he was employed. Having exhausted the resources within reach, he was obliged to quit his position at Martorell, S. Sadurni, Villa Franca, and Vendrell, and draw nearer to Tarragona, Reus, and Valls. His great object was to bring on another action, for the purpose of establishing the superiority of the French arms in the feelings of his own army, as well as of the Spaniards; for notwithstanding the splendid successes which he had achieved, that opinion was daily losing ground while the Catalans confined themselves to a system of desultory warfare.

CHAP.
XXIII.
1809.

St. Cyr,
118.

Upon such a system Reding had resolved to act in conformity to the opinion of all his best officers. Hope, enterprise, and activity, were thus excited; and the spirit not of the irregular force alone, but of the troops, was raised, as every day brought tidings of some partial and animating success. Meantime he exerted himself in endeavouring to bring the army into a state of discipline, acting when that was in question with a decision which he wanted at other times. One regiment he broke for having refused to obey a Swiss officer in action. His character stood so high with the Catalans, that this vigorous measure did not injure his popularity; for he had the full support of public feeling and of the local authorities. The Junta of Tarragona coined not only the plate of individuals, but that of the churches also, for the pay of the troops; and for two months the hospitals received their whole supplies, and the army the whole of their pay, clothing, and food from the inhabitants of that faithful city. It was at this time that one of the best and ablest men whom these calamitous times forced into action, the Baron de Eroles, D. Joaquin Ybañez, resigned his place in the Superior Junta, and putting on the Miquelet uniform, took the command of a body of those troops, believing that he could serve his country more effectually in the field than in council. Throughout the

*State of the
Catalan
army.*

Cabañes,
c. 14.

CHAP. whole subsequent course of the war no Spaniard made himself
 XXIII. more conspicuous, nor has any one acquired a higher or more
 1809. irreproachable name.

New levies.

A conscription of every fifth man throughout the principality was called for, without distinction of ranks, in obedience to the decree of the Central Junta; the men were willing to serve, but an error was committed in embodying them with the regular troops, because the Catalans disliked that service, and were proud of the name as well as attached to the privileges of the Miquelets. Some attempt was made to bring this irregular but most useful force into a better state of order and uniformity, for which purpose the camp-marshal, D. Josef Joaquin Marti, was appointed their commander-in-chief; but this proved altogether abortive. Even the proper returns of the men who were to be under his command could not be obtained; and though he had ability as well as zeal to qualify him for the charge, nothing could be done, when means of every kind were wanting. The province, however, was in arms. The people, knowing their own physical strength, and impatient of seeing their country oppressed by a handful of invaders, began to murmur at the General's inactivity: he was assailed by anonymous writings, accusing him of incapacity or treason; and this General was as sensitive to such attacks as he was sensible of the difficulties that surrounded him. Brave, honourable, humane, and well acquainted with the art of war, he wanted the main qualifications for it when entrusted with command; having neither fortitude to persevere against vulgar clamour in the cautious system which he was sensible was best suited to the time, nor promptitude to act with vigour and decision when he departed from it.

*Cabañes,
c. 14.*

*Reding de-
termines to
act on the
offensive.*

The Central Junta had sent D. Tomas de Veri, one of its members, as its representative to Catalonia. A like measure had been adopted in the tumultuous times of the French Revo-

lution; the circumstances in Spain were altogether different, and these missions appear neither to have produced good nor evil. On the present occasion Veri was in favour of active operations; and that opinion, which had necessarily much weight with Reding, was strengthened by assurances that an insurrection would be attempted in Barcelona as soon as any movements on his part should be made to favour it. The Camp-marshal Marti was called upon to form the plan of a general attack; his own judgement was decidedly opposed to it, but Reding had determined upon action in deference to the popular cry. He did not like to hear it remarked that the troops were more willing to eat their rations than to march against the enemy; and he wished also to ascertain in the field whether any reliance might be placed upon the Somatens, and upon that general enthusiasm which he did not participate, and in which he had no faith. If he entertained any hope, it was founded upon the promised effort in Barcelona, . . . which of all hopes had the least foundation; . . . for the fortresses having now been well victualled, the time was gone by when it might have been of advantage to have got possession of the city. But even after his resolution to act on the offensive was taken, the movements of the army were delayed by that ominous mood of mind which draws on ill fortune more surely than it foresees it. And in strange opposition to what happened in all other parts of the Peninsula, all Reding's plans were perfectly well known to the French, while he obtained no information of their movements or of their numbers on which he could rely. On the other hand, by a singular perversion of principle, the Catalans whom the French had in their pay made it a point of honour and conscience to communicate full and true intelligence. The task was not difficult; for Reding, in the certainty that his intentions were betrayed as soon as they were formed, gave up all hope of secrecy; and every thing was

CHAP.
XXIII.
1809.

*Staff. Befreiungs
Krieg der
Katalonier,
p. 148.*

CHAP. talked of in public, with a desperate carelessness, as if it were
XXIII. useless to observe even the rules of common prudence.

1809.

February.

The Spaniards driven from Igualada.

Feb. 17.

*St. Cyr,
103-106.
Cabañes,
c. 14.*

*Failure of
the French
attempt
against the
Abbey of the
Creus.*

The Spaniards occupied a line from Martorell to Tarragona, through Bruch, Capelladas, S. Magi, and Col de S. Cristina; the head-quarters, under Camp-marshal D. Juan Bautista de Castro, being at Igualada: this line covered the whole south of the principality, and touched upon the north at Valls, where the levy in mass was to be effected. St. Cyr waited till the Spaniards had weakened themselves to his desire by extending their line so far as to render it vulnerable in many points: then leaving Souham's division at Vendrell to observe the troops at Col de S. Cristina and near Tarragona, he with the divisions of Pino, Chabot, and Chabran, attacked the Spaniards on their left at various points; and though at one time Chabot's division was in danger of being routed, succeeded in driving them back upon Igualada, where, with an imprudence which experience had not corrected, large magazines had been assembled. They had neglected to occupy the road from Llacuna in sufficient strength, though it was the key to all their positions on the way to Barcelona; by this road they found themselves attacked in the rear, when falling back already dispirited and in confusion; and it was only by flight that they escaped in the directions of Cervera, Cardona, and Manresa. Castro was removed from his command, for the want of skill or of zeal which he had manifested in these operations. His subsequent conduct confirmed the worst suspicions that could then have been entertained; for he entered the Intruder's service, and holding a military command under him, became, as far as his power extended, the scourge of his countrymen.

It was part of St. Cyr's plan that Souham, when he was apprised of the success of these operations, either by the ceasing of the fire, or by any other means, should beat the detachment at Col

de S. Cristina, and join him at Villarradoña, when it was hoped that the Spaniards might be driven from all their positions, in utter rout, once more within the walls of Tarragona. To effect this the French commander proceeded with Pino's division against a body of Spaniards under Brigadier D. Miguel de Iranzo, who occupied the position of S. Magi. The distance had appeared trifling upon the map: it proved long and difficult, the road during great part of the way being so narrow that the troops, foot as well as horse, could only defile man by man: they did not reach the position till four in the afternoon; the attack lasted till night closed, and the Spaniards then, unable to maintain their ground, retreated under cover of the darkness. Here, however, an unexpected difficulty impeded the conquerors; they were not acquainted with the country, nor had they been able, with all their exertions upon the march, to find any person who could serve them as a guide. From this perplexity they were relieved by a circumstance which would not have occurred if St. Cyr had not deserved and obtained a reputation, most unusual among Buonaparte's generals in Spain, for observing the humanities of war. A Spanish officer, who had been wounded and taken prisoner in this last affair, relying upon the French commander's character, entreated that he would let him be carried to Tarragona: St. Cyr not only granted his request, but finding from him that he was able to direct those who bore him, added, that as there were no peasants to be found at S. Magi or in the adjoining parts, he would send him as far as the Convent of the Creus. By this act of compassion the French were extricated from the difficulty in which they had placed themselves. The wounded officer gratefully acknowledged this kindness, little thinking in what manner he was to serve the enemy. On the morrow accordingly he was sent forward; two or three persons at convenient distances behind observed his

CHAP.
XXIII.
1809.
February.

Feb. 18.

Feb. 19.

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

February.

way, and the French by their direction followed the unconscious guide. During the whole day they did not fall in with a single person; but in the evening when they drew near the monastery, instead of finding there, as they had expected, good quarters and comfortable stores for the troops, who stood in need of both after four days' exertions, they discovered that Iranzo had fallen back to this very point, and occupied it in strength. The French immediately saw that the post could not be forced without artillery, and they had none with them; they made, however, a feint of attacking it, with the intention of attempting an escalade, if the Spaniards should betray any want of alacrity in the defence. But the walls of the inclosure, the windows of the buildings, the roof of the church, and the tower, were presently manned; and a fire was opened upon them from two *violentos*, . . . pieces of small artillery, so named from the manner in which they are used; they are fired not less than twelve times in a minute, and the exertion which this requires is so great, that the strongest and most expert artillerymen cannot continue it more than a quarter of an hour.

St. Cyr,
107-111.

Reding
takes the
field, and
collects his
scattered
troops.

The French had learnt at Zaragoza what it was to attack the Spaniards where there were walls and buildings to be defended; and St. Cyr was not a man who would throw away the lives of his soldiers. His men, instead of the good quarters and better fare which they had promised themselves, were fain to bivouac upon the heights; and in the morning when the General had determined to cross the Gaya for the purpose of getting into a more open country, and effecting his junction with Souham's division, they were obliged to defile under a sharp and well-directed fire of musketry from the Convent. When they reached Villarrodoña, to their great disappointment Souham was not there; the dispatches which had been sent to him had been all intercepted, and a day and half were lost in waiting till he

arrived from Vendrell. Reding meantime, as soon as he heard that his line had been broken, concluded that nothing now was to be done but to collect as many of the troops as he could, and withdraw them again under the protection of Tarragona; and feeling that this service was of too much importance to be entrusted to any one in whom he had not the most entire confidence, he set out himself on the morning in which St. Cyr marched from his unsuccessful attempt upon the Convent. He took with him only a battalion of Swiss, 300 horse, and six pieces of flying artillery; and as he marched from Pla saw the enemy on his right, where they were employed in sacking and burning Villarrodoña and La Puebla. Reding was not aware that the French Commander-in-chief was with this body of the invaders, nor did St. Cyr know that the Spanish General was passing within sight with such a handful of troops. His force, however, was soon increased with the detachment which had retired from Col de S. Cristina, and with the 1200 men under Iranzo, whom he now recalled. He then proceeded to S. Coloma de Queralt, and there effected his junction with Castro, with the detachment stationed at that place, and with the force which Castro had collected after his defeat. But here he was alarmed by learning that the enemy had entered Valls.

St. Cyr on his part was not without some anxiety concerning Reding's intention. The movement which that General had made from his right upon his centre, led him to apprehend a purpose of re-establishing the line of communication with his left beyond the Noya, in which case the French detachment at Igualada would be in danger. That thought had passed across Reding's mind. He had supposed that the object of the French, by occupying Valls, was to cut off his retreat to Tarragona, and intercept his communications with that fortress; and his first

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

February.*He is advised to retreat.*

CHAP. impulse was to move upon Igualada, and then upon Montbuy,
XXIII. to cut off the enemy at both places. But it was his fate never
1809. to decide resolutely and act with promptitude; a council of war
February. was held; the Deputy Veri was for retreating, with the view of
covering the plain of Tarragona. Accordingly they set out
from S. Coloma, with the intent of leaving Valls on the right.
That day they reached Montblanch. A party of French ap-
peared in their rear, reconnoitred them, and then turned by the
Col de Cabra toward Pla and Valls. As it was thus made cer-
tain that the enemy was observing them, a second council was
held on the following morning, at which Marti was present, who
had been summoned from Tarragona, where he had been left
with the command. The force which Reding had with him con-
sisted at this time of 10,000 men, who were in a better state
than any body of troops which the Spaniards had yet brought
into the field in that quarter. The question was asked, Where the
French were posted, and in what numbers? The General could
only answer that they were supposed to be in Valls, and that he
estimated them at from 5000 to 6000, without artillery. Marti's
opinion was, that as the object was to save the army and protect
the plain of Tarragona, where Reus and the other towns would
otherwise be at the mercy of the enemy, it was not advisable to
risk an action with a foe whom they knew to be superior in
cavalry, and who, they had reason to conclude, had other troops
near enough at hand to be brought together and overpower
them if a battle should be ventured. He advised, therefore,
that a few light troops and Miquelets should make a demonstra-
tion by the Col de Lilla against Valls in the morning, and make
their way afterwards as they could, either to join the corps on the
Llobregat, or to Lerida; that their guns should be sent to that
fortress, and that the troops should defile during the night by

Prades and a mountain path impracticable for artillery to Con-
stanti, where the whole army might be collected safely in a
position that would cover the plain.

General Doyle, who, after the most anxious endeavours to
effect something for the relief of Zaragoza, had joined the Ca-
talan army that day on its march, was for hope and enterprise.
The troops were in good condition and in good heart, and the
opportunity favourable, when they were within reach of a force
inferior in number. Reding, perplexed by these jarring opi-
nions, and never venturing to decide at once upon his own
responsibility, took a middle course. He thought it derogatory
to steal as it were away through a mountain path like a guerilla
chief; and moreover Marti was one of the persons on whom his
suspicions had fixed. The course on which he determined had
neither the prospect of advantage, nor the certainty of safety.
It was to retreat with his artillery and baggage by the Col de
Riba and the banks of the Francoli; to begin the march that
evening; not to seek the enemy, but not to refuse battle if a
favourable opportunity should be offered. Marti represented
that to take this line was not only seeking the enemy, but putting
it in their power to bring on an action upon ground advantageous
to themselves. But Reding certainly had not come to this deter-
mination in the view of bringing on a battle, without incurring
the responsibility of such a measure. He suffered some provi-
sion carts to be cut off by a reconnoitring party almost under
his eyes, without permitting his troops to resent the insult; . .
they were tired, he said, and he would not weaken the main
body by sending out any detachments. Nor could Doyle pre-
vail upon him to make his retreat by day. It was commenced at
seven in the evening, in good order and with all possible silence.

CHAP.
XXIII.
1809.
February.

Cabañes,
c. 15.

St. Cyr, who was at this time with Pino's division at Pla,
had ordered Souham never to lose sight of Reding's movements.

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

February.

*Battle of
Valls.*

Feb. 25.

That General occupied Valls ; he had entered it on a market day, and supplied his hungry troops with the corn brought thither from Aragon and the plain of Urgel, as if there had been no enemy to fear ! His advanced guard was to the north of that town, having its left upon the Francoli ; his right was in the direction of Pla, and he had a post at Picamoxons, the point at which Reding must debouche upon the plain of Valls, if he went either by the valley of Montblanch or the Col de Lilla. At this point Souham's orders were to give him battle ; though some apprehension was entertained that he might pass by the Col de Cabra, with the view of cutting off the French from Barcelona. No such thought had ever entered Reding's mind*. The narrowness of the passes and the badness of the road made the night march slower than had been calculated ; at five in the morning, however the vanguard under Castro and half the centre had passed Valls, leaving the enemy's camp-fires on the left. They were proceeding silently and in the best order, and no advanced post of the enemy had yet been discovered, when, as the General was passing a little bridge, a volley of musketry opened upon him within pistol shot. This unexpected attack occasioned a momentary disorder : measures, however, were immediately

* M. St. Cyr (p. 118) represents Reding as seeking this action by General Doyle's advice ; but it is certain that his intention was not to risk one. The French Commander renders justice to this brave and unfortunate General in all respects, except that he always imputes to him a presumptuous confidence, which Reding never felt. The constitution of his mind disposed him to the very opposite error. This is not asserted speculatively, but upon his own statements and other equally incontestable documents. M. St. Cyr says that Reding escaped in the ensuing action from the hands of a young officer only because that officer had the generosity not to kill him, as he might easily have done, when a pistol shot put an end to his own life. The condition in which Reding escaped does not seem to show that there was much desire of sparing him.

taken to prevent the enemy from cutting off that half of the army which had not yet come up ; the troops took their station with alacrity and precision ; the artillery on both sides began to play : the French descended from the heights of Valls in several columns ; they were met by the Spaniards, and attacked so vigorously, that notwithstanding the advantage of the ground, they were driven back.

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All the information which Reding had previously obtained concerning the enemy agreed in affirming that they had no artillery. It was therefore not without surprise that he had found two batteries open upon him. They had been silenced, however ; the Spaniards had behaved even to his wish, and a manifest advantage had been gained. But when the French had been driven to the heights, reinforcements arrived which enabled them to make a stand, and Reding perceived by their smoke-signals and their rockets, that they were communicating with a fresh body of troops. It was now noon ; his own men had been marching all night, and having been several hours in action, they began to feel exhausted. He therefore concentrated them, sent off the whole of the baggage, and determined to continue his retreat, as soon as they should have taken food or rest. The position which he had chosen was a good one, behind the bridge of Goy, on the right bank of the Francoli, and covered by that river. But time for rest was not allowed them. Pino's division had now come up, and St. Cyr himself had arrived. That General, who was desirous of gaining such a victory as should give the French the utmost confidence in what was called their moral superiority, forbade his artillery to fire ; though the opportunity for firing with advantage was such, that the commandant feigned not to understand the order, and when after a third discharge it was repeated to him in the most formal manner, expressed the unwillingness with which he obeyed. That of the

CHAP. Spaniards was well served; and, when having crossed the
 XXIII. river and ascended the height, the French proceeded with the
 1809. bayonet to the attack, they advanced under a fire of musketry
 February. which could not have been more regular at a review. The right
 St. Cyr, wing of the Spaniards was threatened, but the main attack was
 125. made upon the left, and this the enemy succeeded in breaking
 between four and five in the evening, about an hour after the
 action had been renewed. The Spaniards then began to retreat
 in good order for the next half hour, . . . but then as usual fear and
 insubordination prevailed as soon as hope was lost. Reding him-
 self, when it was no longer possible to perform the part of a
 general, was distinguished for his personal bravery. A body of
 French dragoons surrounded him and some of his staff: two of
 his aide-de-camps were killed, and he himself received five sabre
 wounds from a French Colonel, with whom he was personally
 engaged. The cavalry rendered little service in covering the
 retreat; but the infantry of the right and centre, and part of
 the left, retired through the vineyards, where the horse could
 not pursue them. The other part of the broken wing took to
 the mountains, and made their way to Tortosa.

Cabañes,
c. 15.
St. Cyr,
117, 126.

The French
received at
Reus.

The French estimated their own loss in this action at about a thousand men, that of the Spaniards at four; . . . the Spaniards supposed it to be about two thousand on either side. In fact the evening was so far advanced, that they suffered comparatively little in their flight. Reding reached Tarragona that night; . . . that city was only three leagues from the scene of action, and thither the greater part of the dispersed troops found their way before morning, some corps in good order, others in small parties. Some made for Reus, and from thence to Cambrils and Col de Balaguer. The artillery and baggage fell into the enemy's hands. On the following day Souham entered Reus, a rich commercial city, second only in size and importance to

Barcelona. The inhabitants had not, as had every where till now been done, forsaken it; on the contrary the municipality went out to receive the conquerors, and agreed to raise a contribution for the use of the army. Their wealth may explain a conduct which, in the then state of public feeling, surprised the French * themselves. This supply came at a time when the paymaster had not a single *sous* in the chest. Resources of every kind were also found here, and here were some thousand of sick or wounded Spaniards in the hospital, whom St. Cyr sent to Tarragona. This measure led to a negotiation with Reding, by which it was agreed that in future whatever patients might be found in the hospitals should not be regarded as prisoners, but allowed to remain where they were, and to rejoin their respective armies upon their recovery.

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1809.

Arrangement concerning the wounded.

St. Cyr, 127-8.

The enemy now occupied Villaseca and the port of Salon, and thus cut off Tarragona from all communication by land with the rest of Spain. They profited by their success with their wonted alacrity; and yet they might have improved it farther, and gained a far more important advantage than the victory itself, had they been aware of the alarm which prevailed at Tortosa, and of the condition in which that fortress had been left. The Governor and the Junta sent for General Doyle, who, as far as personal influence and example could go, possessed in an extraordinary degree the talent of exciting activity and creating confidence. He found the fortifications in such a state that they could not have resisted a coup-de-main; and the city so ill provided, that if the works could have resisted an enemy, it must

Alarm at Tortosa.

* It is said by M. St. Cyr that they acted by Reding's advice, and that by so advising them he saved the city from inevitable destruction. But this does not accord with Reding's own language, for in a part of his dispatch to the Central Junta which was not published, he mentions this conduct of the Cabildo with indignation.

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*Lazan separates his
army from
Reding's
command.*

presently have been reduced by famine. Provisions were now collected by requisition from the neighbourhood, receipts being given for the amount (for the public money had been constantly ordered to Tarragona), and the citizens were called out to work upon the ramparts; so that the place was put in a state for resisting any sudden attack. There were but two roads by which artillery could be brought against it: one was defended by the fort at Col de Balaguer; but from that post the troops at this important crisis were deserting for want of provisions. By General Doyle's exertions it was immediately stored, and the other road, through Falcat, which there had been no attempt to guard, was occupied according to his directions by 600 Somatenes. This was a position which could well be maintained by a small force, and this timely occupation prevented the advance of a French detachment which had been ordered thither. The Tortosans were soon encouraged by the arrival of the Marques de Lazan, who brought his army there when they might better have kept the field. The want of cordiality between this General and Reding had been sufficiently manifested to be known even by the enemy; and Lazan now formally announced, that having previously been appointed second in the Aragonese army by the Cortes of that kingdom, he had upon the loss of his brother succeeded to the command in chief; and considering himself as independent of the commander in Catalonia, should thenceforth look upon the protection of Aragon as his proper business: but he would do whatever he could consistently with this object, for covering Catalonia on that side. Reding represented this to the war-minister as an act by which Lazan crippled the Catalan army, and exposed his own troops to certain destruction, without the possibility of effecting any service; and instructions were accordingly dispatched from Seville that he should obey Reding's orders. The same spirit of provincialism was prevailing in Va-

lencia ; a corps of 6000 men from that kingdom was stationed at Morela, with orders to remain there, though neither this place nor that part of the country were threatened, but because that position covers Valencia on the side of Aragon. There was neither unity in counsel nor in command ; . . each of these three provinces had its own army, acting upon its own views, and of course all acting without effect.

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And yet St. Cyr had mistaken the character of the Spaniards when he supposed that the battle of Valls would convince them of their moral inferiority to the conquerors. Far from it ; it had even raised the spirit of the Catalans ; and the Central Junta spake of it in their proclamations as one of those defeats in which ill fortune brought with it no dishonour, but rather hope and confidence. It proved to the Spanish army far more disastrous in its consequences than in itself ; they were crowded into Tarragona, and the French commander, by sending thither several thousand sick and wounded from the hospitals at Reus, increased or perhaps occasioned an infectious disease which broke out among them, and was aggravated by the uncleanness arising from want of linen, the neglect of those precautions, and the destitution of all those means without which armies cannot be kept in health. We reconcile ourselves to the slaughter of a battle or a siege, because such destruction is the business of war, and the men engaged in it take their chance bravely for the evils which they are inflicting upon others ; . . but there is somewhat at which the heart revolts in making a league with pestilence or famine, however much the system of war may require and justify it. St. Cyr knew that disease was doing his work in Tarragona ; officers as well as men were dying in such numbers, that if he could have kept them thus shut up within the seat of the contagion, more would perish in a month than he could have hoped to destroy in four pitched battles. He deter-

*Mortality
in Tarra-
gona.*

*St. Cyr,
133.*

CHAP. XXIII. mined therefore to remain in the plain of Tarragona as long as his army could be supplied with a quarter of a ration.

1809. *March.* But the Spaniards were not idle. The Somatenes were once more in force and in activity; and the left of the Catalan army, which had not been engaged in the defeat, harassed the enemy on their right and in the rear. When Reding had formed his unfortunate plan of operation, 10,000 Miquelets and Somatenes, under Wimpffen, had been sent beyond the Llobregat to take advantage of any insurrection that might be attempted in Barcelona. These irregular troops, when they had no longer to depend upon the combinations of the Commander-in-chief, but were left to themselves to carry on their own kind of warfare in their own way, began again to acquire that superiority which such warfare assured them; Chabran's division, harassed by repeated assaults, fell back successively from Igualada upon Llacuna, S. Quinto, and Villa Franca; and the Spaniards in that quarter, full of hope as ever, resumed the blockade of Barcelona. For a time they cut off St. Cyr's communication with that city, and their position excited no trifling uneasiness in Duhesme and Lechi, who well knew the disposition of the inhabitants. But the English squadron, the sight of which always afforded hope to the Barcelonans, was compelled by a heavy gale to stand out to sea: and Chabran's division, recovering the ground and the reputation which it had lost, once more broke up the irregular blockade. St. Cyr meantime maintained his position as long as it was possible to feed his army there; he then determined upon moving it into the little plain of Vicq, where he expected to find corn, and to remain till the harvest should be ripe in the environs of Gerona, where he foresaw that in the course of the siege his army must be established. The battle of Valls had not given that army the confidence which their General was so desirous they should possess; there was in fact an

impression upon them which they had never felt in any other service; they knew that they were not the objects of mere military hostility, in which there is neither enmity nor ill will between man and man, but that they had the hatred and the curses of the whole country. Their removal now they looked upon as a retreat, and they knew what were the dangers of a retrograde movement in Catalonia. St. Cyr better understood how little able Reding was to take advantage of such a movement at that time; and for the purpose of showing his men that he could defy the Spaniards, while at the same time he was careful not to wound the feelings of a General whom he respected, he sent an officer to Tarragona with a flag of truce, and a letter stating that, as circumstances rendered it necessary for him to draw nearer the French frontier, he should depart from Valls the following day at noon, and if General Reding would send a detachment thither at that time, the hospital which had been formed in that town, and which it was of such consequence for him to preserve, considering the number of his sick, should be consigned to him as it stood. It was well furnished from the houses which the inhabitants of Valls had abandoned on the entrance of the enemy. The French commander left only a very few wounded men, who were not in a state to bear removal; because he doubted whether Reding would be able to make the Spaniards observe the agreement which had been concluded upon that subject. As far, however, as opportunity was given, it was properly performed.

This done, after having remained something more than three weeks in the plain of Tarragona, the French retreated toward the Llobregat. Chabot's division occupied at this time Monblanch, for the double purpose of rendering it more difficult for Reding to communicate with Wimpffen, and of preventing the latter from holding any communication with Lerida. A brisk firing in a quarter where no alarm was looked for, occasioned

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1809.
March.

St. Cyr,
134, 145-7.

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1809.

March.

St. Cyr,
138.

Vicq de-
serted by
its inha-
bitants.

St. Cyr,
156.

this General to send out a reconnoissance. It was in time to save a detachment of 600 horse and foot, with two pieces of cannon, which Marshal Mortier had sent from Fraga to communicate with St. Cyr's army, and bring him back intelligence of the state of things from Catalonia. A smaller party would have had no chance of succeeding in this service; and if this had been four-and-twenty hours later, it would have been cut off. They were fortunate enough to find a division of their countrymen here, but only half their object was accomplished; for though the army delayed its movements two days in the hope of facilitating their return, and escorted them to some distance, the attempt was found to be so hopeless, that they were fain to continue with St. Cyr.

The troops in Tarragona were not in a condition to harass the French on their retreat; but the retreat was most important to them. They obtained room to distribute their sick, and the progress of the contagion was stopped as soon as its main cause was thus removed. Some affairs took place beyond the Llobregat with Wimpffen's division, which dispersed, as it became irregular troops to do, when they were not acting at advantage. When the enemy reached Vicq, they found that that city had not been infected by the ill example of Reus; the Bishop, five or six old men, and the sick who were unable to remove, were the only inhabitants of that populous city who remained. The others, with a spirit worthy of their country and their cause, upon the unexpected approach of the invaders abandoned all that they could not carry with them in their instant removal, and went to seek shelter where they could; many of them actually lived among the mountains during the whole three months that the French continued there, though at the time of their flight the weather was severe, and the snow daily falling. There had been no time to destroy the provisions, much less to remove them;

if St. Cyr had not succeeded in effectually concealing his intention of quartering the troops there, this would have been done, and his army could then have derived no advantage from their change of position. As it was, they found corn enough to last till the harvest, lard for a month, and wine for a fortnight: but the change of diet, air, and climate (for they had moved into a higher region), and the want of wine as soon as the stock was exhausted, produced disease among the soldiers; and it was well for them that neither Reding nor his army was in a state to resume offensive operations; so that they were enabled to rest.

St. Cyr himself remained some three weeks in Barcelona. From the depôts of the Spaniards, which in the course of this successful campaign had fallen into his hands, he had supplied the garrison of that city with grain, pulse, and salt for three months' consumption; but there was not enough ammunition for a fortnight's siege. Of being formally besieged indeed there was not now even the remotest danger; but from within there was sufficient cause for inquietude. The honourable feeling of nationality, for which the Catalans are eminently distinguished, was in no part of the principality stronger than in its capital. At this very time Barcelona had two *tercios* of Miquelets in the field, raised among its inhabitants, and paid and clothed by them. The individuals of those regiments, having no uniform by which they could be recognised, used to enter the city fearlessly whenever it suited them, for the purpose of visiting their friends, raising recruits, and receiving money or clothing: nor was it in Duhesme's power, with all the vigilance, and it may be added, all the villany of his police, to detect a single person in this practice; so unanimous were the Barcelonans in their detestation of the intrusive government, and so well was the secret kept. That police was continually reporting to Duhesme and Lechi, and these again to the Commander-in-chief, the existence of

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XXIII.
1809.
March.

*Arrest of
the persons
in office at
Barcelona
for refusing
the oath.*

CHAP. XXIII. conspiracies which they had discovered ; but the members of the police were men of such character, that St. Cyr suspected these schemes to be suggested by their agents, if they were not mere fabrications, brought forward for the most nefarious motives. Now, however, that he was on the spot, he allowed Duhesme to exact an oath of allegiance to the Intruder from all the public functionaries, and from the Spanish soldiers who had been disarmed after the treacherous seizure of the place. Sunday was the day chosen for this act of oppression. They were summoned to the house of the Royal Audience, which was surrounded with horse and foot, and 3000 troops were drawn up on the esplanade and the sea-wall ; the display and the actual force being necessary to keep down the indignation of a generous and most injured people. Every member of the Audience refused thus to disgrace himself and betray his country ; only one of the *Relatores* took the oath, and only three of the numerous persons employed in the inferior departments. The French were not more successful in tempting the military. Persuasions and promises availed as little as the threat of immediate imprisonment. The Contador Asaguerre told Duhesme, that if all Spain were to acknowledge Joseph, he would expatriate himself. The French executed their threat. Nine-and-twenty of these honourable Spaniards were sent prisoners, some to Monjuic, others to the citadel. The people, undeterred by their strong escort, followed them as in procession, cheering them as they went, and promising that their families should be well provided for during their imprisonment. Many others were put under arrest in their own houses, and the whole of the military were, by St. Cyr's orders, marched with the prisoners of war, under convoy of Lechi's division, as far as the Fluvia, where Reille received and sent them into France : and by Lechi's return the commander-in-chief received the first intelligence from that country which had reached him since he

*Prisoners
sent to
France.*

*St. Cyr,
151, 158.*

crossed the Fluvia himself, . . five months before. His last remaining anxiety was for the provisionment of Barcelona ; and that was removed soon afterward by the arrival of a squadron from Toulon, which had the rare good fortune to reach its destined port and return in safety. The place was thus amply supplied with military stores as well as provisions, and the siege of Gerona then became the only object of the French.

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XXIII.

1809.

April.

Barcelona
relieved by
sea.

The dispatch in which Reding informed the Central Junta of his defeat at Valls, was marked equally by his habitual despondency and his magnanimity as to every thing which regarded himself. He rendered the fullest justice both to the policy and humanity of St. Cyr's conduct as opposed to that of Duhesme and Lechi, and expressed an apprehension that it had produced some effect upon the public mind. Some ground for this had been afforded by what had happened at Igualada and at Reus ; but the evil extended no farther. He had no reliance upon the Somatenes, he said, nor upon the enthusiasm which they displayed ; order was wanting among them, and where order ended confusion began. He complained that he could obtain no intelligence of the enemy's numbers, whereas they were well informed of every thing that related to his army ; and he gave as a reason for having taken the field, the opinions of those whom he had consulted, and the popular cry. He made no mention of his own wounds ; and when the government published such parts of his dispatch as were intended for publication, they noticed, as it became them, his silence upon this point. The wounds, though many, were not thought dangerous, and they appeared for a time to be going on well ; but the symptoms changed, and in the course of a month they proved mortal. He fell in a foreign land, and in the service of a foreign state ; but the cause in which Theodore Reding fell was the same for which his brother Aloys had fought amid their native mountains ;

Reding dies
of his
wounds.

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it was the cause of his own countrymen as well as of the Spaniards; the cause of all good men every where. The motives for which ordinary wars have been undertaken are so mean and transitory, and come so little to the heart of man, that after a few years have elapsed all interest concerning them is exhausted; and even nationality does not prevent us from feeling, that they, whose lives have been expended in such contests, have died rather in the exercise of their profession than of their duty. But the struggle of Spain against Buonaparte is of the same eternal and unfading interest as the wars of Greece against Xerxes: at whatever distance of time its records shall be perused, they will excite in every generous mind the same indignant and ennobling sympathy. Not, therefore, in an ungrateful service did Reding lay down his life, for with those records his name will be perpetuated: Switzerland will remember him with pride, as one of the most honourable, though not most fortunate of her sons, and Spain with respectful gratitude, as a soldier not unworthy of her service in its best day, and true to it in its worst.

*Peasants of
the Vallés.*

Right as this General was in his opinion, that the cooperation of an irregular force was not to be relied on in a plan of regular operations, he estimated the effects of a popular resistance below its real importance, nor did he fairly appreciate the Catalan spirit. A fine example of it was shown immediately after his death by the peasants in the Vallés. Their country lies in the line between Vicq and Barcelona, and the peasants taking arms to impede the communication occupied the heights near the Church of Canovellas, about a mile from Granollers, which is the capital of that district. The district is so strong, that the invaders were desirous of opening the communication by persuasion rather than by force; and therefore communicated to these insurgents in due form, that the French commanders ordered their troops to

make war upon soldiers only, not upon peasants; that if they would lay down their arms, and retire every man to his house, no injury should be done them; but otherwise there was a division of the enemy in their front, and another was coming in their rear. A written answer was returned, in the name of the peasants of the Vallés. "They held it a great honour," they said, "to form a part, though but a small one, of the Spanish nation; and they had seen what their requital had been for receiving and entertaining the French troops, when their government had commanded them so to do; their peaceful habitations had been invaded, their property plundered, their houses burnt, their women violated, their brethren murdered in cold blood, and above all, the religion of their fathers outraged and profaned. Nothing remained for them but to repel force by force; and as they could not by themselves defend their open villages, they had taken to the mountains as to a strong hold: from thence they would defend their valleys, and oppose to the enemy the most obstinate resistance, as long as the government enjoined them to consider as enemies the subjects of Napoleon. The Spanish general in Catalonia was the person whose instructions they were to obey. For themselves, emulating as they did the courage and constancy of all Spain, they would never depart from those principles which the whole nation maintained. General St. Cyr and his companions might have the dreadful glory of seeing nothing but ruins in all that country; . . . they might pass in triumph over the bodies of those whom they had sacrificed; but neither they nor their masters should ever say that the people of the Vallés had submitted their necks to a yoke which the whole nation had justly rejected." The Spaniards are a nation upon whom deeper impression would be made by a circumstance of this kind than by the defeat of one of their armies; and the success with which these peasants harassed the French, and cut

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

April.

CHAP. off some of their artillery and baggage, raised the spirits of the
XXIII. Catalans more than the battle of Valls had depressed them.

1809.

April.

Blake appointed to the command.

Movements of the Aragonese.

Upon Reding's death the command devolved upon the Marques de Coupigny, till Blake was nominated as his successor, and with more extensive powers, being appointed Commander-in-chief in Catalonia, Valencia, and Aragon. This General, after leaving Romana, had been sent to serve under Reding, and was in Tortosa at the time of Reding's decease, where Lazan, obeying without hesitation the Central Junta's instructions, resigned to him the charge of his division, and continued with it, to serve under him. The Aragonese had not been disheartened by the loss of their capital; they had regarded the former siege with a happier, but not with a prouder feeling, for of all examples, that of dignified suffering makes the deepest impression upon a generous and high-minded nation. The lordship of Molina de Aragon was surrounded with points which were occupied by the enemy. Nevertheless, the people, cut off as they were from support, took arms, trusting in themselves and the strength of their country: for want of better weapons some of them used slings, as the Somatenes also had done with good effect; and they made wooden artillery, so light, that a single man could carry one of these pieces up the heights, and yet strong enough to bear from fifteen to twenty rounds. The French endeavoured to surprise them with a detachment of 1800 men, for the purpose of opening the communication with Madrid, which they had cut off; but part of this body was itself surprised in Iruecha, and put to flight with some loss. The Molinese were about to pursue their success against another party in Alcolea, when they learned that General Suchet, who had now the command in Aragon, had passed the Puerto de Daroca, and was entering the lordship on its open side, with some 4000 foot and 600 horse. In the course of two hours the

cavalry would reach Molina. The Junta gave instant orders for removing the ammunition, the town was deserted by all its inhabitants, and the men in arms retired with the Junta to the mountains five leagues distant. The efforts of the French to arrest the Junta or any of its members were in vain; the proclamations which they issued to intimidate or to delude the people were of no effect; and after remaining five days in Molina, they returned with no other advantage from this expedition than that of carrying away all the flocks and herds they could find.

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1809.
May.

There was no part of Spain in which the French had imagined themselves to be so secure as in Aragon, after the fall of Zaragoza. During that siege the army of Aragon had proved completely inefficient, and the Catalans were too hardly pressed themselves to make any efforts in behalf of their neighbours. In reliance upon this, some troops had been withdrawn to march into Germany; and that larger detachment under Mortier had been called off towards the Douro, which was to cooperate with Marshal Soult. Advantage was taken of this when Blake's appointment to the command had raised the spirits of the soldiers and of the people, . . both being alike ready to impute their ill success to any cause except the true one, and to expect better fortune with every new commander. Blake brought with him a good name, for though always unfortunate, the Spaniards had never suffered any disgrace under his guidance; and the Roman government never demeaned itself with more generosity toward an unsuccessful general than the Central Junta. The first effect of the impulse which his arrival communicated was on the side of Lerida. As soon as Mortier had withdrawn from the neighbourhood of that city, the garrison, in conformity to Blake's instructions, was on the alert. A French detachment occupied Barbastro and the places near,

Monzon recovered by the Spaniards.

CHAP. with other points on the right of the Cinca; on the left of that
 XXIII. river they were in possession of Monzon; and from thence, as
 1809. from a strong hold, they tyrannized over the country, levying
 May. contributions without mercy. The town of Albalda having
 refused to answer one of these oppressive demands, a detach-
 ment of 1400 was sent to make what was called an example of
 that place for its disobedience. The governor of Lerida, D.
 Josef Casimiro de Lavallo, who was apprised of this movement,
 stationed 700 of his garrison at Tamarite, under Colonels Perena
 and Baget, with some Aragonese and Catalan Somatenes, who
 succeeded in routing the enemy; the greater part retreated to
 Barbastro, and in consequence of this movement and defeat,
 about 200 only remained in Monzon. The inhabitants rose
 against them, though they had only seven muskets; knives and
 bludgeons supplied the place of other weapons; they recovered
 the Castle, and drove the invaders out.

Capture of
 a French
 detachment.

May 16.

Monzon, though in these days a place of little strength, was
 nevertheless a fortress of importance in that country, and in a
 war where every advantage, however trifling, raised the spirits
 of a people whom no disasters, however severe, could depress.
 The French therefore being determined to retake it, and punish
 the people, came in considerable force, horse and foot, down
 the right bank of the Cinca to Pomar, where they crossed by
 the ford and the ferry. Perena, who had hastened to Monzon
 upon its recapture, was there to receive them with his battalion
 and with a *tercio* of Miquelets; and they were repulsed in their
 attack. They obtained reinforcements, and repeated it on the
 morrow, and forced their way into the streets; but Baget with
 his detachment came in all speed from Fonz, and arrived oppor-
 tunely enough to assist in driving them out a second time, with
 considerable loss. They called to their assistance the 2000 men
 that were left in Barbastro, but meantime the Cinca had risen

so as to be no longer fordable ; and while they were thus cut off from succour, the Spaniards at Monzon were in communication with Lerida. Perceiving now their danger, they made for Albalete, hoping to cross at Fraga by the bridge ; their intention had been foreseen, and a detachment from the garrison of Lerida, weak as it was, was dispatched to secure that point. Thus anticipated in that direction, and being now not more than 1000 men, with about forty horse, they fled toward Fonz and Estadilla, to cross the river in the mountains, above its junction with the Eseva. They were closely pursued by Perena and Baget ; their commander was drowned in attempting the passage, eight companies were made prisoners, the whole detachment which had crossed the Cinca was thus cut off, and the French in consequence withdrew from Barbastro.

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1809.
May.

The prisoners were marched to Tarragona, where the Catalans, after so many reverses, were in no slight degree elated by seeing them. More however from humanity than from a motive of ostentation, proposals for exchanging them were immediately made to St. Cyr, and accepted by him. The French suffered another check, less mortifying indeed and less important, but one which impeded their movements, in the destruction of their flying bridge upon the Ebro. This, which was large enough to carry some hundreds at a time, they had removed from the river where it approaches Caspe, to the part near Alborge, where it was surprised and burnt by a detachment from Mequinenza. Blake mean time was not less successful in his own operations. Part of his troops were stationed at Morella, to oppose the French division which occupied Alcañiz and its district, and to cover that part of Catalonia and Valencia which there borders upon Aragon : others formed a cordon along the Algas, to guard the difficult country by which they might have threatened Tortosa, or interrupted the communication between that place and Mequinenza. With the

*Blake moves
upon Al-
cañiz.*

CHAP. approbation of the Junta Blake formed a plan for driving the
XXIII. enemy from this part of the country ; for which purpose it was
1809. necessary to collect these troops, and strengthen them with a
May. small detachment from the garrison of Tortosa. The French
division was that which Junot had commanded at the siege of
Zaragoza, and was now under General Laval ; it consisted of
from 6000 to 7000 men and 500 horse, having lost about half
its number during the siege. Laval's head quarters were at
Alcañiz, where the greater part of the division was stationed ; but
he was at this time in the field with 2000 or 3000 men, for the
purpose of driving away the Spaniards, who were observing him
too closely, and continually harassing his posts.

D. Pedro Roca was to conduct the troops from Morella to
the place appointed for their junction, Lazan those from the
Algas. Both had orders to avoid any action with the enemy till
the junction should have been effected. But it so happened
that Laval took up his quarters in the village of Beceyte on the
day when Lazan had to arrive there, and the Spanish general
rightly concluded that his instructions were not intended to pre-
vent him from seizing any decided advantage which might pre-
sent itself. He stationed some light troops in points that com-
manded the defiles through which the French must pass, and
killed or wounded about an hundred of the enemy, with the loss
of only five or six men on his own part. On the following day
the junction was effected at Monroyo, great difficulty having
been overcome in bringing the artillery through such a country.
Having reached the Ermita at Fornoles, the vanguard under
D. Pedro Texada was sent forward to interpose between Alcañiz
and Val de Algorfa, which was the usual position of the enemy's
van. Two columns, under D. Martin Gonzalez da Menchaca
and D. Josef Cucalo, had preceded them to occupy the villages
of Castelseras and Torrecilla. The remainder of Blake's little

army, consisting of three columns of infantry, the cavalry, and the artillery, began their march by night along the only road from Morella to Alcañiz, from which place they were five or six hours distant.

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May.

Upon reaching Val de Algorfa, it was seen that the enemy were protected by the walls of the inclosures, and by a chapel, where they had formed a parapet. They were some 500 or 600 in number, and being dislodged from thence by the artillery, retreated toward Alcañiz; but when they had advanced about half a league, they came upon Texada's detachment, and being thus between two fires, dispersed with as much alacrity as a body of Spaniards could have done. By this time Menchaca and Cucalo were approaching the city from the left, and the French, who were sallying forth against Texada, seeing themselves threatened on that side also, began to retreat hastily in the direction of Samper. There, and at La Puebla and Hajar, they collected their troops, withdrawing them from Caspe and Calanda. The people of Alcañiz, priests, women, young, and old, went out to meet their deliverers, carrying refreshments for the soldiers, and blessing them with prayers and tears. Blake himself was affected at the sight, and said, that if the tyrant of the world, as he called Buonaparte, could have seen the emotions of that multitude, and heard their shouts for their King, their country, and their religion, he would perhaps have begun to doubt the possibility of raising for his brother in Spain a party, not of persons attached to his cause, but even of those who would be resigned to his usurpation.

The French
withdraw.

Upon the approach of a Spanish detachment the enemy withdrew from Samper to the Puebla de Hajar, and being there reinforced from Zaragoza, advanced toward Alcañiz, to revenge themselves for their late reverses. They were now 10,000 foot,

Suchet
comes
against
him.

May 21.

CHAP. with 800 horse and twelve pieces of artillery. Suchet com-
 XXIII. manded in person. Blake was informed of their approach,
 1809. and drew up his army to meet them on the plain of Alcañiz,
 May. before that city. The plain is surrounded with heights. About
 two musket shot from the city is a range of hills, accessible for
 cavalry, and on all sides sloping gently to the plain. The road
 to Zaragoza crosses there. Here he stationed the main body of
 his forces, their wings being supported by two batteries, which,
 with others in the centre, completely flanked the whole line.
 The weak side of this position was on the right, where the
 plain was lowest, and there were trees enough to afford cover to
 the enemy; but the heights terminated here, and upon their
 loftiest part, where a chapel commanded the road from Caspe,
 he stationed 2000 men, under Camp-marshal D. Juan Carlos
 Areizaga. The vanguard, under Texada, was placed on an
 eminence in front of the position; some light troops, among
 the olive-yards on the left, to prevent the French from turning
 them on that side; and the cavalry, under D. Miguel Ibarrola,
 in front of all, upon the Zaragoza road.

May 23.

*Defeat of
 the French
 before Al-
 cañiz.*

At six in the morning the enemy appeared: the advanced
 parties retired before them, and the cavalry and the vanguard
 fell back before superior numbers, as they had been instructed;
 the infantry to the chapel on the right, the horse, with two pieces
 of flying artillery, to the protection of their batteries. The
 chapel, as Blake had anticipated, was the main point of attack;
 the enemy presented themselves in front of this post and on the
 right, and occupied all the immediate heights. After a brisk
 fire on both sides, a column of about a thousand grenadiers
 attempted to take this position with the bayonet: they were
 broken presently, and the light troops of the Spaniards in their
 turn attacked the French on the heights, who kept their ground.

In the hope of relieving this post, which he saw would be again attempted in force, Blake directed Menchaca to make an attack upon the enemy's centre; but the French were strong enough to attend to this and renew their efforts against Areizaga. The second effort, however, was not more successful than the first. The Spanish cavalry had been ordered from the Zaragoza to the Caspe road, to assist in supporting this point: and as they came out from the trees, a discharge from the French infantry wounded their commander Ibarrola; they were attacked with a superior troop of horse, and fell back to the position. The enemy, now abandoning their first plan of winning the chapel, turned upon Menchaca, who found himself suddenly assailed by very superior numbers; he fell back in good order to the position, but one light battalion found it necessary to retire upon Areizaga's post. Encouraged by this, the French made a desperate attack upon the centre of the Spanish line: it was saved by the artillery: they approached almost to the cannon's mouth, but were mown down by a fire of grape; and those who turned one of the batteries fell by the fire of the troops. Defeated in this attempt also, they withdrew to the heights on which they had first been seen, and after an action of seven hours, both armies remained looking at each other. The rich plain of Alcañiz was between them; and Blake said in his dispatch, that the sight of it might have warmed the heart of the coldest Spaniard, and animated him to defend the beautiful country which God had given him. It would have been rash in him to have attacked the enemy when they had the advantage of the ground; to have thus decidedly repulsed them was no inconsiderable advantage in the state of his army, some corps of which had never before been in action. The French retreated under cover of the night, and took up a strong position behind the Huerba near Zaragoza. They left 500 dead on the

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

May.

CHAP. field, and their total loss was estimated at * 2000 ; that of the
XXIII. Spaniards did not amount to 400.

1809. Among the officers whom Blake particularly commended
May. for their conduct Lazan was one, who was at his side during the whole day ; Loigorri, the commandant of the artillery, was also deservedly noticed, and Areizaga, upon whom the brunt of the action had fallen ; to the two latter he frankly declared that the victory was owing. He returned thanks to his army ; and noticing that a few wretched men had fled from the field, said their names should be struck off the roll, that the Spanish army might no longer be disgraced by them. The Central Junta, in consequence of this success, nominated him Captain General of Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, and Murcia, as well as General-in-chief of the united army of those provinces, and conferred upon him the Encomienda of the Peso Real in Valencia. The officers whom he recommended were promoted also, Areizaga to the rank of Lieutenant-General.

Anniver-
sary at Va-
lencia.

The day on which the battle of Alcañiz was fought was celebrated at Valencia as the anniversary of their insurrection against the intrusive government. The ceremonies were characteristic of the times and of the people. The festivities, as usual in Catholic countries, began on the eve of the holiday ; the city was illuminated on the preceding night, the portraits of Ferdinand and his ally the King of Great Britain were exhibited under the flags of the allied kingdoms ; and the Valencians displayed their national humour in caricatures of Murat, Buonaparte, and Joseph. In the morning, the civil authorities, the

* Marshal St. Cyr speaks of this as *un petit événement heureux*. (165.) Comparatively small as the numbers were on either side, and uninfluential as it was upon the issue of the war, it was a well-fought battle, in which the French, under one of their ablest generals, were fairly defeated.

new-raised levies, and the city volunteers, went in procession to the Plaza of the Cathedral, where a statue of Ferdinand had been erected upon a Grecian column. The statue was concealed behind a silk curtain, so disposed as to fall in tent-hangings and disclose it, when the Captain General, D. Joseph Caro, asked the people in their own dialect if they wished to see their King? At the same moment the music struck up, the bells were rung, the guns fired, and the shouts of the multitude were heard prevailing over all. They then proceeded to the Cathedral, where the banners of the volunteers were blessed by the Archbishop at the high altar, and afterwards delivered to them at the feet of the statue. The display was in French taste, but it was sanctified by Spanish feeling. The Valencians were reminded of their defeats as well as of their triumphs; they were told that many of their countrymen who had assisted in driving Moncey from their gates had fallen in the field of Tudela, or lay buried under the ruins of Zaragoza.

A week after the ceremony Blake reviewed his army at Caspe, on St. Ferdinand's day, which of all festivals in the year the Spaniards then regarded with most feeling. The Romanists, instead of birthdays, keep the festival of the saint from whom they take their names; this therefore was especially sacred to a people who, measuring the virtues of their captive King by their own loyalty, believed him to be all that they desired, and all that he ought to have been. They were told by their government that King St. Ferdinand, who had united in himself all the virtues of a man, all the talents of a hero, and all the qualities of a monarch, looked down from the heights of Heaven with complacent eyes upon the defenders and avengers of one who, as he inherited his throne and name, so also did he imitate and adore his virtues. An annual service on this day was appointed to be held in all cathedral and collegiate churches for

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

May.*Celebration
of King St.
Ferdinand's
day.*

CHAP. evermore in remembrance of the sacred war against the usurper ;
 XXIII. and the day following was to be kept as a perpetual anniversary
 1809. for the souls of all who fell in it. Blake's army had now been in-
June. creased to 14,000 men: their late conduct had filled him with what
 might have seemed a well-founded hope ; and their appearance
 and discipline were now so satisfactory, that as they filed before
 him, he said, a few more such days as that of Alcañiz would open
 for them the way to France. There were indeed at that time
 evident marks that the French were dispirited : they had been
 weakened by the withdrawal of Mortier's division ; and having
 in this last action for the first time been beaten by a Spanish
 force, not superior to them in number, and when the advantage
 of cavalry was on their side, it was believed that they were pre-
 paring to retire from Zaragoza. Blake was informed that their
 papers and baggage were already without the city, ready to be
 removed ; and that they had actually begun their march toward
 Navarre, but returned in consequence of receiving dispatches
 on the way. The news of Buonaparte's failure at Essling arrived
 at this time ; and when Blake communicated it to the troops in
 general orders, he observed that it had taken place on the day
 when they had defeated another of his armies at Alcañiz.

*Executions
 in Barce-
 lona.*

May 16.

While the hopes of the Spaniards in this quarter had thus
 been raised by their own success, by the events in Germany,
 and by the news from Portugal, circumstances occurred at Bar-
 celona to heighten their indignation against the oppressors of
 their country, and exasperate the desire of vengeance. In con-
 formity to a scheme concerted with the inhabitants of that city,
 Coupigny had sent a body of troops, who were to be admitted in
 the night, while the attention of the garrison should be called off
 by the cannonade of a Spanish frigate upon one of the batteries.
 The ship performed its part, and the troops approached the
 gates ; but no movement was made to favour them. The French

had obtained sufficient intelligence to put them upon their guard, and render it impracticable, and several persons were in consequence arrested. One of these, by name Pou, a doctor of laws in the university of Cervera, being asked upon his trial before the military tribunal whether he had not distributed fifty muskets, replied yes, and that he would do so again if he had an opportunity, as they were for the defence of his religion, his King, and his country. They told him this could not be, for religion forbade the shedding of blood, the King desired no such proceedings, and the country abhorred them: he replied, that as they neither professed the Catholic religion, nor acknowledged Ferdinand for King of Spain, nor belonged to that country, it was to be expected that he and they should differ in opinion. They asked him to whom the muskets had been distributed: his answer was, to good and loyal Spaniards, whose names he would never disclose. A young tradesman, who was tried before the same tribunal for endeavouring to purchase ammunition for the same purpose, threw back the appellation of traitor upon Duhesme, saying, "Your Excellency is the traitor, who, under the cloak of friendship, took possession of our fortresses: I only bought part of what you plundered from us." This person, with two others, was hanged, at the same time that Pou and the Prefect of S. Cayetano were strangled, the Prefect administering the last offices of religion at the place of execution to his fellow-sufferers.

These executions occasioned a strong feeling among the Catalans, and it was heightened by a decree of Duhesme's against the clergy, who were at the head, he said, of all the conspiracies for assassinating the French, and who made their churches and convents so many places of meeting for the conspirators. All such buildings therefore were ordered to be closed at six in the evening, and not opened till half after five

CHAP.
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1809.
June.

Blake advances to-ward Zaragoza.

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XXIII.

1809.

June.

in the morning. If any person were found in a church or belfry between those hours, or in a convent if he did not belong to it, he was immediately to be delivered over to a military commission as a conspirator; and a secret agent of the police was to be appointed, who was to watch every church and convent, and be paid at its expense. The indignation of the Spaniards made them more eager in their hopes and expectations of deliverance; and the Valencians more especially expressed their confidence of fresh victories, because of the appearance and temper of the troops who marched from their city to join the army under Blake. That general's headquarters were at Samper de Calanda, part of his troops being stationed at Híjar and Puebla de Híjar. Having received intelligence that a French corps, which was estimated at a third part of the force under Suchet, had been detached to Carineña, and was committing its usual excesses in the surrounding country, he formed a plan for cutting off this corps, and then advancing upon Zaragoza, in the hope of effecting the deliverance of that city, an exploit which, if it were achieved, would of all possible successes produce the greatest impression upon the public mind, not in Spain alone, but throughout Europe. With this view he directed Areizaga to take post with his division at Botorrita, while he with the rest of the army proceeded to Villanueva de la Huerva. The artillery was to move behind Longares, where it was expected that the enemy would pass on their retreat to Zaragoza as soon as they knew the Spaniards were in motion. When Areizaga reached Botorrita, he learned that the greater part of the French had retired to their main body, about 1500 only remaining at Puebla de Muel, and these moved off so quickly towards the Xalón, that it was not possible to cut them off, . . . only a convoy which they would have escorted to Zaragoza was taken by the Spanish advance.

As this corps had not fallen back upon the main body, which it might easily have done, but had passed on toward Alagon, Blake was confirmed in his opinion that the French did not mean to defend Zaragoza if it should be attacked. Nevertheless, reflecting that the country in his rear was entirely open, and considering the general situation of the Spanish armies, the importance of preserving his own, which was in so promising a state, and the complicated and hazardous movements of a retreat, in which he knew how little it could be trusted, he deemed it by no means advisable to bring on a general action, and therefore did not alter Areizaga's position, looking upon Botorrita as a strong post, where, in case of any reserve, the enemy might be detained. When he joined Areizaga there, the troops had begun to skirmish; this had been brought on by that general's making a reconnoissance in considerable strength; and Blake was so well satisfied with the behaviour of his troops, that he endeavoured to surround the enemy, but they retired in time. Early on the following morning Suchet drew out his whole force from Zaragoza to attack him. The firing began at the advanced posts by five in the morning, and went on increasing till the same hour in the afternoon, when the French resolved to break the Spanish line, supposing that the men were weary and the ammunition spent.

Blake's advanced guard was at Maria, where the road from Zaragoza to Madrid crosses the cordillera: the ground between him and the city consisted of hills and vales, ridge behind ridge. His cavalry was stationed in the high road, the rest of the line was formed by the infantry and artillery. The Spaniards, fighting and retreating in good order, fell back successively from one of these heights to another, but when they reached the fourth, their cavalry had been worsted. Blake then thought it necessary to fall back on Botorrita, which he did with as much

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

June.

Suchet attacks the
Spaniards.

June 14.

Blake retreats to
Belchite.

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

June.

June 16.

order as the nature of the ground would permit. A few guns were spiked and abandoned; not from necessity, but because it was more advantageous to fire them to the last than bring them off. The two armies were near, and in sight of each other, when night closed. Blake expected to be attacked the next day; but as the enemy manifested no such intention, he rightly concluded that they were manœuvring either with a view to surround him, or to threaten his rear. Accordingly he ascertained that 3000 French were posted at Torrecilla. About two hours before nightfall a brisk fire was opened upon his left, with the intent of making him change his position, in which case his rear would have been exposed to this detachment. But the attack was repulsed, as was a second which the enemy made upon the centre a little before midnight. The Spanish general then retreated to Belchite in perfect order, which he did without being molested. The next day the enemy came again in sight, and Blake, who had hitherto had no reason to distrust his troops, took a position in full expectation of being attacked on the morrow, and in good hope of repelling the enemy as completely as he had done before Alcañiz.

*Flight of
the Spani-
ards.*

Belchite, once the capital of a petty Moorish sovereignty, stands upon the slope of some bending hills, which almost surround it: toward Zaragoza the country is level, covered with gardens and olive-yards. The position which Blake had taken was singularly advantageous; his right was completely safe from the enemy's cavalry, and protected by a chapel, with a number of outbuildings and two large sheep-folds, which were all pierced for musketry: to attack the centre, the enemy's horse must be exposed to a tremendous cross fire, and the left had their retreat upon the strong post which was occupied by the other wing. Blake's arrangement was so made, that if the enemy, as he expected, should make a great effort on his

left, three columns might be brought to attack them on that side; and if unsuccessful, they could have fallen back upon the centre and the right flank, being meantime assailable only in front, and protected the while by their artillery, which also had its retreat secure to the same strong post. He had harangued his troops, and they made a thousand protestations that they would do their duty. The attack was made, as he had expected, on the left; four or five shot were fired on both sides, and the French threw a few shells, which wounded four or five men. But upon one shell falling into the middle of a regiment, the men were seized with a sudden panic and fled; the panic instantly spread, . . . a second and a third regiment ran away without firing a gun, and in a few minutes the generals were left with none but a few officers in the midst of the position. With all their efforts they could not rally more than two hundred men, and nothing was left for them but to make for the nearest strong place, leaving artillery, baggage, and every thing to the enemy.

The defeat was in all its circumstances so thoroughly disgraceful, . . . so disheartening and hopeless in its consequences, that Blake almost sunk under it. He told the government that he was incapable of entering into details, but considered it due to the nation that a judicial inquiry should be instituted into the conduct of a general under whose command an army of from 13,000 to 14,000 effective men had been utterly routed and dispersed. "He knew that he had not been culpable," he said, "but after so many proofs of his unhappy fortune, he wished not to be employed any longer in command. As a Spaniard and a soldier he was still ready to serve his country in an inferior station, and he requested only that some portion of his present pay might be continued for the support of his family, or a part of the *Encomienda* which had recently been conferred upon him, but which it was not fitting that so useless

CHAP.
XXIII.

1809.

*June.**June 18.**Blake offers
his resignation,
which
is not ac-
cepted.*

CHAP. a person should retain. The government, however, neither
XXIII. accepted his proffered resignation, nor instituted any inquiry.
1809. The former would have been unjust towards a brave and ho-
June. nourable officer whose conduct was unimpeachable, and his
character above suspicion ; the latter must have been altogether
nugatory. The panic had been instantaneous and general, and
it was impossible to punish a whole army. All that could be
done was to publish the whole details, in no degree attempting
to disguise or palliate the injury and disgrace which had been
brought on the nation : to declare that the commander-in-
chief and the generals had done their duty, and retained the
full confidence of the country, and to brand the fugitives in a
body, as men who were the opprobrium of the Spanish name,
and had rendered themselves objects of execration to their
countrymen.

The men who in their panic had thus lost all use of reason,
as well as all sense of honour and of duty, were not likely, when
they found themselves in safety, and recovered their senses, to
be affected by this denunciation. A religion which is con-
tented to accept the slightest degree of attrition, and keeps short
reckonings with conscience, had taught them to be upon easy
terms with themselves ; .. moreover the moral disease was so
endemic, that it had ceased to be disgraceful : the greater part
of these men had behaved well at Alcañiz and in the subse-
quent operations ; and no doubt expected to be more fortunate
on a better occasion, for a report was raised that the French
had received so great a reinforcement at the moment of com-
mencing the action as to render resistance hopeless ; and
though this was indignantly contradicted by Blake, the men
found an excuse for themselves in believing it. The disgrace
was deeply felt by the government, and by the general whose
hopes were blasted by it in the blossom ; but the Spaniards

were in no degree disheartened, not even those upon whom it brought immediate danger; and when the French, in the course of a few days, attempted to carry Mequinenza by a *coup de main*, they were beaten off with considerable loss.

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XXIII.

1809.

June.

Commence-
ment of the
guerillas.

At this time also that system of warfare began which soon extended throughout Spain, and occasioned greater losses to the French than they suffered in all their pitched battles. The first adventurers who attracted notice by collecting stragglers from their own dispersed armies, deserters from the enemy, and men who, made desperate by the ruin of their private affairs in the general wreck, were ready for any service in which they could at the same time gratify their just vengeance and find subsistence, were Juan Diaz Porlier in Asturias, and Juan Mar-
tin Diaz in Old Castille, the latter better known by his appella-
tion of the * Empecinado. A lawyer, by name Gil, commenced the same course in the Pyrenean valleys of Navarre and Ara-
gon. After a short career of some two months he disappeared, and Egoaguerra, who renewed the attempt, withdrew from that wilder way of life to engage in Doyle's battalion. The third
adventurer who at this time raised the spirits of the Pyrenean provinces, and for a while gave employment to the French in Navarre, was that D. Mariano de Renovales by whom the Con-
vent of S. Joseph had been so gallantly defended at the last siege

Porlier.

The Empe-
cinado.

Renovales
in the val-
ley of Ron-
cal.

* Various explanations have been offered of this name. One account says, that upon finding his family murdered by the French, he smeared his face with pitch, and made a vow of vengeance. Another, that he was so called because of his swarthy complexion. But in the account of his life it is said that all the inhabitants of Castrillo de Duero, where he was born, have this nickname indiscriminately given them by their neighbours, in consequence of a black mud, called *pecina*, deposited by a little stream which runs through the place; and the appellation became peculiar to him from his celebrity.

CHAP. of Zaragoza. Having been made prisoner when the city sur-
 XXIII. rendered, he had effected his escape on the way to France, and
 1809. collected in the valleys of Roncal and Anso a body of men and
 May. officers, who, like himself, believed that the scandalous manner
 in which the terms of capitulation had been violated by the
 French released them from any obligation of observing it.
 They had probably agreed to rendezvous in these valleys as
 many of them as could escape, and his intention was to form
 them into a body, and rejoin the army. But when it was known
 that they were collecting there, and that the mountaineers, con-
 fiding in their presence, refused obedience to the intrusive go-
 vernment, 600 men were ordered from the garrison of Pamplona
 to enter the valleys at six points, and reduce them to subjection.

*He defeats a
 French de-
 tachment.
 May 21.*

Men who, like Renovales and his officers, had served at Za-
 ragoza, were neither to be lightly surprised nor easily taken.
 They were upon the alert, the mountaineers were ready for their
 assailants, and of the column which advanced against the little
 town of Anso not a man escaped. The four columns which
 entered by Navasques, Uztarroz, Salvatierra, and Fago, effected
 their junction; but the movements of the Spaniards were con-
 certed and executed with as much precision; and after two days'
 fighting the French were driven to the foot of a high rock called
 Undari, where all that survived, seventy-eight in number, with
 their commander, the chef de batallon, Puisalis, were taken pri-
 soners: the sixth column was not engaged, forty men having
 deserted from it before they entered the valleys; the others
 thought it imprudent to proceed, and thus they were preserved
 from suffering a like fate with their companions. Puisalis being
 severely wounded, was lodged by Renovales in his own quarters,
 and treated with the utmost care. The other prisoners were
 sent with a guard of forty men to be delivered to General Blake,
 but the ruffian, Buruchuri by name, who had charge of the

escort, when he had advanced far enough to be under no control, massacred them all; . . . a crime which he appears to have committed with impunity. Puisalis was more fortunate; as soon as his wounds were healed, he was sent with five other prisoners to Blake, and reaching him a little before the rout at Belchite, recovered his liberty at that time.

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1809.
June.

This intelligence cheered the Aragonese and the Catalans after that most disgraceful dispersion, and both Lazan and Blake took measures for assisting and encouraging the mountaineers. Ammunition was sent from Lerida; Renovales himself was indefatigable in his exertions: he collected arms from all the villages within reach, sent for armourers from Eybar and Placencia, and set up an armoury in Roncal. A second force was dispatched to crush the growing insurrection. The valley of Roncal was the part which they attacked; the Spaniards were driven from the point of Yso, where their advance was stationed; but Renovales arrived in time with 200 men of the vale, and as many more from that of Anso; he drove the enemy out, and pursued them as far as Lumbier, with the loss of more than forty killed; and twice that number of wounded were removed on the following day to Pamplona. This second defeat had so weakened the garrison of that city, that the Spaniards now cut off their communication both with Aragon and with France; they scoured the roads in all directions; not a day passed in which some party of the invaders, who hitherto had travelled in safety in those parts, was not intercepted and cut off, and sometimes the enemy were pursued to the very gates.

*A second
party de-
feated.*

June 18.

The Duque de Mahon, one of those traitors to their country who had sided with the Intruder, in full confidence that they were taking the safe part, was at that time Viceroy of Navarre: and he addressed a proclamation to the inhabitants of Roncal, affecting to believe that they had taken no share in the insur-

*Proclama-
tion of the
Duque de
Mahon.*

CHAP. rection; calling upon them to unite with the French troops for
 XXIII. the purpose of apprehending and punishing the disturbers of the
 1809. peace; and assuring them that the present struggle was excited
June. solely by the personal resentment of certain individuals, whose
 interests were opposed to those of the nation, of the clergy, and
 of the nobles. If they should be seduced by these deceivers,
 the result could only be, the loss, if not of their lives, yet cer-
 tainly of their liberty, and of that happiness which they had hi-
 therto enjoyed. But, on the contrary, if they proved themselves
 worthy of the King's favour, by their obedience to his government
 and their cordiality with the allied French troops, it was his in-
 tention and that of the French commandant at Pamplona, Ge-
 neral D'Agoult, to represent their good behaviour to the throne;
 that when the arms of the Emperor, now victorious at Vienna
 and throughout all Italy, should expel the enemies of public order
 from Spain, they might partake in the benefits which were to be
 expected from so wise and humane a prince. This proclamation
 June 28. was answered by Renovales with the bitterest scorn. He ad-
 dressed the viceroy as Ex-Duque de Mahon, telling him, if he
 disliked that style, that the person who used it was a Spaniard,
 and one who respected the orders of his sovereign; which sove-
 reign, acting through the Supreme Central Junta, had proscribed
 him as a traitor, and therefore he had now no title. He re-
 proached him with ingratitude towards the house of Bourbon,
 with disgracing his ancestors, with sacrificing his religion, his
 king, his country, and his honour. He told him that the people
 of Roncal, like those of Anso, were attached to their own in-
 stitutions, and true to their lawful king; that they had fought
 for him with a spirit like that of their ancestors; that the magi-
 stracy had encouraged the enthusiasm of the people; and that
 he, unworthy as he was, had enjoyed the honour of leading them
 to victory. They despised his favour, and they despised his

threats; and if he would march out at the head of a French division, and fix time and place where the question between them might be put to the decision of the sword, he, Renovales, would meet him there, a true Spaniard in the cause of a rightful though an oppressed king, against a false one in the cause of a potentate whom his followers impiously called almighty; and if the Ex-Duque would appoint this meeting, that almightiness should be tried.

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Five persons who were charged with having joined the insurgents of Roncal were put to death at Pamplona upon the Intruder's law of extermination against all who should take arms against him. The gallows was erected without the gate of S. Nicolas, and the sufferers were executed with their faces toward Roncal, and left hanging there. The proclamation which announced their punishment, declared, that for every person, whether soldier or countryman, who should be murdered by the banditti, a prisoner who had belonged to them should be put to death. This was answered by an act of retaliation. Renovales seized five persons who were acting under the intrusive government, beheaded them, and exposed their bodies on the high road, with an inscription on their shoulders, saying they were agents of the French robbers, who had been thus punished by Spanish justice. He declared, that, for every Spaniard whom the French should put to death, he would behead two French prisoners; and that if the commandant of Jaca continued to plunder the people and the churches, and burn the houses, as he had begun, he would, for every house that should be burnt, set a village on fire on the French side of the Pyrenees, instead of promoting peace and friendly intercourse, as he had hitherto done, between the peasants on the frontier.

*Executions
and retri-
butions.*

General D'Agoult tried what might be done with Renovales by conciliatory means. He thanked him for his treatment of

*Attempts to
win over
Renovales.*

CHAP. XXIII. Puisalis, and of those prisoners whom Buruchuri had butchered ;
1809. a crime of which he entirely acquitted the Spanish officer. He
August. applied to him now, he said, by General Suchet's orders ; and
joined his own intreaties to that General's offers. First he requested him to send back twenty-five artillery-men who had been captured by his people on the road from Tafalla, and who he understood were well treated. Renovales, he observed, owed him this in consideration of the manner in which his prisoners were used, though more than six and thirty officers had broken their parole, beginning with the Camp-Marshal Villava. After experiencing every kindness, he had found means to escape by a bribe of 4000 livres, and was said to be now in Roncal, having thus dishonoured himself. If Renovales also had broken his word by escaping when he was a prisoner of war, there had been something in his conduct which justified it ; and if he would now pacificate Roncal and the vallies of Aragon, and restore order there, he would entitle himself to esteem and to the King's favour. " You are supporting a chimera," said the French commander ; " your troops are routed on all sides. You reckon upon the English. I know them better than you do ; and if you desire the good of your country, take the advice of an old soldier, who went through the Revolution as a royalist, and joined the present government when he saw that the only man capable of supporting it had appeared. You are in a like position. The Bourbons exist no longer upon the throne. The Emperor and his family have superseded them. Let us be his faithful friends and allies, and render our country happy, instead of contributing to its ruin."

Renovales answered, the artillery-men were his prisoners, thought themselves fortunate in being so, and would have entered among the troops if he would have allowed them. Villava was not in Roncal, nor in the district under his command ;

wherever he was, he would be able to answer for his own conduct in making his escape. "If I did the same," said he, "on the way to Pamplona, it was because the French had violated a solemn capitulation. I was the first person whom General Morlot, in contempt both of his word and honour, and in breach of the terms, plundered of horse and baggage; and if a French general may be allowed thus to disregard so sacred a right, I know not why a Spanish prisoner should be withheld from attempting to escape. Wonder not at seeing me at the head of the Spaniards, since I have seen General Junot in Zaragoza at the head of the French, after his * capitulation in Portugal." To all the offers which were held out to him, he replied, that he was and would continue true to his legitimate King, whose faithful subjects would freely shed their blood in his cause, and would yet reverse the scene, and re-establish him upon his rightful throne. "I know," said he, "that your Excellency feels the injustice of the cause which France is supporting; . . . that you hear the voice of honour in your heart, and that you know what is the right path." General Plique, commander of the citadel at Zaragoza, endeavoured also to bring over Renovales to the Intruder's service, representing to him that the Austrian army was destroyed, that Russia had given the most public proofs of its connexion with France, and that the French had obtained a most decisive victory † in S. Domingo. No efforts, no combination of events could now prevent the complete establishment

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* Renovales evidently did not know the terms of that capitulation.

† There could be no intention of deceiving Renovales, nor was a victory in S. Domingo likely to have any effect in determining his conduct. But this mention of one may show how little the French officers knew of public events; nothing in fact but what their own government chose to let them know, . . . and that government gave them always as much falsehood as truth.

CHAP. of King Joseph. The blow which had ruined Austria had de-
 XXIII. stroyed all the hopes of the Spaniards. "Insurrection," said the
 1809. Frenchman, imitating the style of his Emperor, "insurrection
August. passes away; madness rages and destroys, and then becomes
 calm; the good alone is permanent. Secure for yourself the
 glory and the delight of saving a country which ought to be dear
 to you; join the cause of a good King, who desires not, by a
 terrible and necessary execution, to reign over ruins and car-
 casses; and I am authorized to offer you the rank in his armies
 which you hold among the insurgents."

*Troops sent
 from Zارا-
 goza against
 the Valleys.*

The answer was such as became a man who had done his
 duty at Zaragoza. "Till the moral strength of the Spaniards and
 of their government were destroyed," he said, "it was in vain
 to think of ruining their armies. Neither the supposed victories
 upon the Danube and in S. Domingo, nor the adhesion of the
 Emperor Alexander, nor the immense forces which were said to
 be at Napoleon's command, would break the spirit of Spain or
 of England, actuated as those countries were by principles of
 justice and high-minded rectitude." The hope of seducing Reno-
 vales being now no longer entertained, 5000 men were sent against
 him from Zaragoza; 2000 of these, being reinforced with 500
 Aug. 21. more at Jaca, proceeded against S. Juan de la Peña; and having,
 after a long resistance, driven D. Miguel Sarasa from that post,
 advanced upon the valley of Anso. Plique, with the other 3000,
 occupied the positions of Salvatierra, Castella Nuevo, and
 Navascues: 800 from Orbayceta and Pamplona united in the
 valley of Salazar, and 450 from Lumbier at Zavalza. Their
 numbers enabled them to move upon more points than the
 Aug. 27. Spaniards could guard; and having entered Salvatierra, where
 the advanced parties were driven before them, they proceeded
 next day in four columns, two on the right attacking the heights
 of Sasi and Virgen de la Peña, the centre by the strait called La

Foz, and the left by the heights of Mayhia, which divide the jurisdictions of Salvatierra, Navascues, and Burgui. These positions were attacked by 3000 men, and defended only by 600; they were maintained from six in the morning till two hours after mid-day; the French then on the right gained the height at Sasi; and this success would have enabled them to come upon the rear of the Spaniards at the other point. Renovales therefore fell back to the bridge and town of Burgui, from which he was compelled to withdraw as evening began to close, and the enemy then entered and set fire to it. The town of Anso was entered the same day by the first division of the French, after a brave resistance.

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From Burgui, on the following morning, the French in three divisions attacked the Spaniards, the right and left on the heights of Mendivelza and Odieta, the centre upon Bochuela. At all these points they were three times repulsed, some Russian deserters distinguishing themselves greatly on the Spanish side. The mountaineers thought the day their own, till, at noon, they were apprized that the French division from Anso was coming by Garde upon their rear, and already occupied the heights of Puyeta and Muga de Roncal. Renovales then fell back in good order upon the town of Roncal, took up a position there, and maintained it till evening closed. But as the ground there was open enough to give the enemy room for manœuvring, he fell back to the strong ground about Urzainqui, the position where he had before determined that in case of necessity the last stand was to be made. During the night, he was apprized that 4000 men were marching from Oloron upon those valleys, and 800 by way of Salazar. Many of his people had dispersed; those who remained were well nigh exhausted; . . . but he was enabled to demand terms, and capitulate for the valleys, as for a fortified town, in a manner of which there had been no other example

Aug. 29.
*Renovales
capitulates
for the Val-
leys.*

CHAP. during the war, and to withdraw with those who chose to follow
 XXIII. him, for other opportunities of serving their country;... more
 1809. fortunate their future services might be; they could not be more
August. honourable.

The French are said to have lost 500 killed and 800 wounded in these latter actions, and this by their own account. Among the Spanish officers who distinguished themselves were D. Miguel Sarasa, and D. Gregorio Cruchaga, names soon connected with that of Mina, which now first began to be known.

*Xavier
Mina.*

Xavier Mina*, the son of a landholder who cultivated his own estate, and was deputy for one of the valleys of Navarre, was a student at Pamplona when the revolution began. He was then in the eighteenth year of his age, and during the earlier part of the war had been confined to his father's house by a severe illness, from which he recovered just after Renovales had been compelled to withdraw from Roncal. A French commander, whose corps was encamped in the neighbourhood, sent a serjeant requiring the father in his capacity as deputy to provide rations for his † men. The serjeant disappeared on the road, and in consequence the house was surrounded at midnight by a detachment of infantry, who had orders to arrest the elder Mina, and bring him to head quarters. The son, however, had time enough

* This account of Xavier Mina differs materially from that which has been published under the title of *The Two Minas and the Spanish Guerillas*, as extracted from the work of a German officer, Captain H. Von Brandt. The German officer, who collected his information in the country, acknowledges that the accounts given upon the spot differ essentially from each other. My statement was derived from Mina himself during his short abode in England. Certainly I have never seen any person whom, from his countenance and manners, I should deem less likely to be given to such company and such courses as in that publication are imputed to him.

† They were to be a pound and a half of bread, ten ounces of meat, and a bottle of wine per day for every man.

to secure his father's escape, and then in his name presented himself to the officer. The French General before whom he was carried threatened him with death, unless the serjeant were produced; but as every thing in that quarter was to be arranged by means of money, Mina obtained his liberty after being detained three days. The party who arrested him had plundered his father's house. This usage, the danger he had escaped, and the injustice of the whole proceeding, roused into full action those feelings which had only been suspended by disease and languor. He provided himself with a musket and cartridge-box, and in that trim presented himself in his own village, and offered to take the command of as many Spaniards as would engage with him in the good work of avenging their country upon its invaders. Twelve adventurers joined him; they took to the near mountains, and there, while they waited an opportunity of action, maintained themselves on his father's sheep.

His first adventure was to surprise a party of seven artillerymen, who were escorting two pieces of cannon and a quantity of ammunition from Zaragoza to Pamplona. This success procured him twenty volunteers. He sent off his prisoners to Lerida, retired again to the mountains, and being informed that a general officer was on the road, travelling with an escort of thirty-four foot and twelve horsemen, he laid an ambuscade for them, in so favourable a spot, that a volley was fired upon the French with sure effect before they had any apprehension of danger. The general was shot in his carriage, some of the escort were made prisoners, and some money fell into Mina's hands. This he immediately distributed among his men, recommending them to send part of it to their families, and retain no more than would be necessary to defray the expenses of their own interment, exposed as they must now continually be to death. The men were thus raised in their own esteem and in that of their

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CHAP. countrymen wherever this was told; and volunteers now pre-
 XXIII. sented themselves in abundance, attracted by a success which
 1809. was reported every where, with such exaggerations as such tales
September. gather in their way. He received however none but those who
 brought arms, or whom he could supply with the spoils already
 taken from the enemy. His party amounted now to about
 threescore persons, distinguished by a red riband in their hats,
 and a red collar to their jackets.

He proceeded now toward the frontiers of Aragon, where a
 band of fifty robbers were adding to the miseries of that afflicted
 country. These he succeeded in surprising; the greater number
 were killed on the spot, the rest he sent prisoners to Tarragona.
 Twelve horses were taken from the party, on which he mounted
 some of his men, and armed them with lances; and every day
 added now to his numbers and his reputation. Rations were
 voluntarily provided for his people wherever they were expected,
 and given as freely at one time, as they were paid for at
 another from the spoils of the enemy. He levied a duty on the
 passes, where a considerable trade in colonial produce was then
 carried on; the clergy also assisted him from their funds, and
 with these resources he paid and equipped his men, and kept in
 pay also a sufficient number of intelligencers. It was in vain
 that the French made repeated efforts to crush this enterprising
 enemy; if his troops dispersed upon the appearance or the
 attack of a formidable detachment, it was only to reunite, and
 by striking a blow in some weak point or distant quarter, render
 themselves more formidable than before. General D'Agoult
 was accused of secretly favouring this young adventurer, and
 sending convoys under weak escort, with the intent that he
 should intercept them. Perhaps this suspicion was entertained
 only because he had been a royalist, and therefore may have
 been supposed to abhor at heart the service wherein he was

engaged. An inquiry into his conduct was instituted, and before it was concluded he put an end to his life by poison.

St. Cyr meantime was informed that Marshal Augereau had been appointed to supersede him in Catalonia, and that General Verdier, who had been an old aide-de-camp of Augereau, had already arrived in the Ampurdan to take the command in place of General Reille, and commence the siege of Gerona. The rout at Belchite enabled the enemy to make all their preliminary movements with little other molestation than what the insufficient garrison of that city could give them; and when Verdier encamped before the place, St. Cyr removed from Vich, and took up a position to cover the siege.

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1809.

September.

Siege of Ge-
rona com-
menced.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SIR A. WELLESLEY ENTERS SPAIN. BATTLE OF TALAVERA.
 RETREAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY. DEFEAT OF THE SPAN-
 IARDS AT PUENTE DEL ARZOBISPO AND ALMONACID.

1809.

*Victor re-
 treats be-
 yond the
 Tagus.*

THE head-quarters of Marshal Victor, after he returned from his movement in favour of Soult to his former position, were at Truxillo: Cuesta was on his left flank, having his head-quarters at Fuente del Maestro, and his advance at Calemonte on the Guadiana, a league from Merida. The British General had formed a plan for cutting off the enemy's retreat by a movement through Castello Branco and Plasencia to the bridge of Almaraz; this he relinquished, because it did not coincide with Cuesta's opinion, and because he found it impossible to prevail upon that general to choose a secure position, or to concentrate his army, which was distributed with so little judgement in an open country, that if Victor had attacked it, an easier victory might have been obtained than that of Medellin. The French have seldom suffered such opportunities to pass, and Sir Arthur was very apprehensive that the army, which had been raised with such exertions, would be dispersed before he could effect a junction with it. But Victor was content to forego this advantage rather than risk the danger of being cut off from Madrid by such an operation as Sir Arthur had meditated; he broke up, therefore, at the beginning of June, and retreated across the

Tagus at Almaraz; Cuesta followed, without obtaining any advantage over him in his retreat, and sufficiently fortunate that the French Marshal was in too much fear of a better army, to profit by the want of discipline in the Spaniards and the want of skill in their commander.

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When Sir Arthur had given up his original plan, it was concerted that he should join Cuesta at Badajoz. Victor's retreat rendered this unnecessary; it was then agreed that he should advance, as he had at first proposed, by way of Plasencia. The army of La Mancha at this time, consisting of 16,000 foot and 1300 horse, was under Venegas, subject to Cuesta's orders. This was the side on which the French were most exposed; Alburquerque, by one operation, though it had only partially succeeded, had retarded the plans of the enemy for more than a month, and, had he not been withheld by the positive orders of men who were unworthy to control him, there is reason for believing that he would have prevented many of the disasters which afterwards occurred. His patriotism was undoubted; no man, indeed, ever more passionately loved his country: his military talents were of the highest promise; and when these moral advantages concurred, his rank and illustrious family ought to have been considered as circumstances to recommend him, giving him, as they would have done, additional claims to the respect of the army and of the nation. With both he was exceedingly popular, especially among the La Manchans; and having been a successful general, almost the only one who had obtained any success, the soldiers had an opinion of his good fortune as well as of his talents. Mr. Frere, who estimated the Duke as he deserved, was exceedingly desirous that he should have the command in La Mancha, and suggested it to Cuesta. "An army," he said, "which had been torn by factions, thrown into confusion by the successive removal of its officers, and dis-

Alburquerque proposed for the command in La Mancha.

CHAP. XXIV. 1809. encouraged by ill fortune, could have no hope of being speedily re-established and conducted to victory, except by a general who was known to them for his successes, and who was personally popular among them, and in the province wherein he was to act. The Duque de Alburquerque was the only one who united in himself these advantages ; and for the situation which he at present held, Venegas would not be less useful, having always served under General Cuesta, and not only near his person, but immediately under his eyes." Unhappily Cuesta was jealous of the Duke's popularity ; and the Supreme Junta were jealous of his rank and influence. Mr. Frere's advice was rejected, and this may be considered as one cause of the failure of the campaign.

Plan of detaching a Spanish force toward Segovia.

It had at first been doubted whether the French would make any thing more than a show of resistance on this side of Madrid ; and a plan was proposed for menacing their retreat and the rear of the metropolis, by detaching a considerable Spanish corps through the Puerto de Arenas to Avila, Arevalo, and Segovia. Such a movement, it was thought, would compel the enemy either to retreat, or to detach a force of correspondent magnitude ; and thus a material advantage would be afforded to the British army, which, when concentrated, amounted only to 20,000 men. Cuesta had about 38,000, well armed but ill disciplined, and ill clothed also, which, in their state of discipline, was an evil of more consequence than may immediately be obvious. The Intruder, with 9000 of his guards, and the greater part of the garrison of Madrid, had joined Sebastiani in La Mancha, and attempted to bring Venegas to action ; finding this in vain, they left 2000 men to defend Toledo, and prepared to bring their whole disposable force, consisting of about 50,000, against the united Spanish and British armies. But the Spanish army was in such a state, that little could be

expected from its co-operation: a smaller force would, under such circumstances, be of greater assistance, as being more manageable and more likely to follow the example and catch the spirit of their better disciplined allies. If, therefore, a large detachment of these troops, by moving toward Segovia, could draw off a body of the French to watch them, they would render more service by such a diversion than could be expected from them in the field. For this reason such a movement was advised both by Sir Arthur and Mr. Frere; that minister not being deterred from the performance of his duty by the clamour raised against him in England, but delivering his opinion to the British general upon the same footing, he said, as he should have done had he been holding a private conversation with Sir Arthur, and as he should equally have ventured to do had he been residing casually in Spain in a private character. There was another reason which made the Junta wish to see Cuesta's army diminished. A suspicion had for some time prevailed that Cuesta had not forgiven his arrest, and that the same temper which led him to those violent measures whereby he had provoked that act of vigour, would tempt him to take some serious vengeance whenever it was in his power. This, it was thought, was more to be apprehended now than at any former time, because the army which his rival, Blake, commanded, had just at this time been shamefully dispersed, and thus the great obstacle to such a project was removed. The Junta were afraid to supersede Cuesta, even if they knew whom to appoint in his place; and they were afraid even to propose this measure of detaching a part of his army, under a commander of sufficient popularity to oppose his designs: but it was not doubted that if such a measure were proposed by the British General as a military plan, they would joyfully accede to it.

Cuesta was wronged by these suspicions; . . he was obstinate,

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1809.

Jealousy entertained of Cuesta.

CHAP. XXIV. 1809. *July 10. Sir Arthur confers with Cuesta.* intractable, and unfit for command; but a right honest man, and one who, from a sense of duty as well as from natural courage, would at any time have laid down his life for the service of Spain. Sir Arthur, whose head-quarters were now at Plasencia, went to confer with him at Almaraz. Fourteen thousand of the Spaniards were at this time stationed at the Puente del Arzobispo; the remainder were about two miles from the bridge of Almaraz, encamped under the Pass of Miravete. Victor had taken up a position upon the Alberche, near Talavera. There, Sir Arthur stated his opinion, the enemy ought to be attacked by the united force of the allies; but it would be desirable to detach a corps of 10,000 towards Avila to turn their right: Cuesta approved the proposal, but desired they might be British troops. Sir Arthur replied, that the British army, to act with advantage, must act in a body; and the Spaniards could better spare such a detachment, being indeed more numerous than was either necessary for the operations on the Alberche, or convenient, considering their state of discipline. These representations were lost upon Cuesta, who estimated his own importance by the numbers under his command; he refused to make any large detachment, but offered to send two battalions of infantry and a few cavalry to join Sir R. Wilson's Portuguese brigade, and march upon Arenas, and thence to Escalona, in communication with the left of the British army. Had Sir Arthur's advice been followed, it was his intention to have recommended Alburquerque to the command; but it was the fate of Spain to be almost always deprived of the services of this brave and able general by the jealousy of meaner minds.

He requires that the passes be occupied.

Sir Arthur proposed also that the Spaniards should occupy the passes at Perales and Baños, and thus cut off the communication between Victor and the French forces in the north of Spain. It was neither known what the amount of that force

might be, nor where it was distributed, nor in what condition it was: but the march of Mortier with some 15,000 men from Aragon to their assistance had been ascertained, and it was certain therefore that a movement might be apprehended from that quarter. The proposal was received with some ill humour on Cuesta's part, for he was surrounded by intriguers, some of whom perhaps sought to serve the enemy by embroiling the allies, and others who, having as much national pride as professional ignorance, had as much selfishness as either; these persons had persuaded the hasty old man that Sir Arthur sought to weaken the Spanish army by dividing it, in order to obtain for himself the glory of expelling the French from Madrid, which was now, they represented, within Cuesta's reach. He was prevailed upon however by his Adjutant-General, O'Donoju, to promise that this should be done; and if the performance fell far short, the detachment being incompetent in force, and almost wholly unprovided, the failure must be imputed to his erring judgement and the disorderly state of the commissariat department, not to any want of faith or perverse purpose on his part.

In pursuance of the arrangements at this interview, the British army broke up from Plasencia on the 17th and 18th of July, and formed a junction with Cuesta on the 20th at Oropesa. Sir R. Wilson marched from his position on the Tietar on the 15th, and reached Escalona on the 23d, threatening Madrid on that side, from which he was about eight leagues distant. Venegas had been directed to break up from Madrilejos at the same time as the British army, march by Tembleque and Ocaña, cross the Tagus by the ford at Fuente Duenas, and advance to Arganda, so to threaten Madrid, which would then be within a few hours' march. Had this plan been followed, either a considerable body of the French must have been detached against

CHAP.
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1809.
July.

*Junction of
the British
and Spanish
armies.*

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July.

Opportunity of attacking the French

Venegas, or he would have entered the capital without resistance.

But Sir Arthur was destined throughout the campaign to have his plans continually frustrated by the misconduct of those from whom he looked for cordial co-operation. On the 22d the combined armies moved from Oropesa, and the advance attacked Victor's rear-guard, which was drawn up in order of battle, upon a plain about a league from Talavera. Their right wing was turned by Brigadier-General Anson, and Alburquerque attacked them in front, and drove them back. They retreated to a position upon the Alberche, a league beyond the town, and the combined armies advanced, and encamped that night in the vine and olive-yards between the town and the French. Sir Arthur had a narrow escape that day; while he was reconnoitring, a three-pound shot was fired at him with so good an aim, that it cut a bough from a tree close to his head. He determined to attack the enemy the following morning, and bring Victor to action before he should be joined by Sebastiani and the Intruder. Nothing could be more favourable to his views than this unskilful halt of the enemy, an opportunity being thus presented for beating them, as he had hoped, in detail. The columns were formed for this purpose at an early hour, and at five in the morning they received orders to march. But when Cuesta was informed of the determination which had been taken, no arguments could induce him to make up his mind, and give the necessary instructions: at midnight he remained undecided, and the orders therefore were necessarily countermanded, . . . not more to the disappointment of the army, than to the sore vexation of the General, who knew the whole importance of the opportunity which had thus been lost. So unaccountable was this conduct in Cuesta, that it has been supposed he scrupled at fighting

lost by Cuesta's indecision.

upon a Sunday. Whatever his reasons were, they have never been explained, and could not have been more valid than this would have been: but thus the fair occasion was let pass; for when, on the morning of the 24th, he was ready to offer battle, it appeared that Victor, profiting by the precious time which had been given him, had decamped during the night, and retired to St. Olalla, and from thence towards Torrejos, to effect that meditated junction which Sir Arthur's measures would have frustrated.

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July.

This retreat surprised Cuesta as much as if his own procrastination had not deprived Spain of the victory which prompt measures would have secured. The British General had foreseen the consequence of so ill-timed a delay, and the disappointment was the more grievous because he could not pursue the French. From the hour in which he entered Spain he had never been able to procure means of transport: . . . he required none for the baggage of individuals, . . . only for provisions, ammunition, money, and military stores, things indispensable for an army: and these were not to be obtained. The country was in a state of total disorganization; and what was more extraordinary, the government seemed to be totally ignorant of this, and to suppose that nothing more was required of it than to issue edicts, which would be carried into effect as if things were in their ordinary course. This inconvenience had been so severely felt, that Sir Arthur, before he left Plasencia, informed Cuesta it would be impossible for him to undertake any farther operations after their arrangements against Victor should have been carried into effect, unless the necessary means of transport were supplied. Justice to his Majesty, and to the army with which he had been intrusted, required this determination, he said, and he was equally bound in justice to communicate it to General Cuesta without delay. The means which he required were such as

*Distress of
the British
army for
want of
transport.*

CHAP. every country in which an army was acting was bound to afford;
 XXIV. and if the people of Spain were either unwilling or unable to
 1809. supply what the British army required, they must do without its
July. services. This declaration had been made as early as the 16th;
 a week had now elapsed, there had not been the slightest effort
 to remedy the evil, and from the same cause the troops were
 now in actual want of provisions. For the Spanish commissariat
 was in the most deplorable state; and that of the British army,
 which was far from being in a good one, could effect nothing in
 a country where they exerted no authority themselves, and the
 government would exert none for them. The evil was aggra-
 vated by the junction of two large armies, in a country which
 had scarcely ever been without troops to exhaust it during the
 preceding twelve months. When the two combined armies
 became competitors for food, the inhabitants naturally preferred
 their own countrymen: . . . it was afterwards discovered also, that,
 with a stupid selfishness, which admits neither of justification or
 excuse, they concealed the greater part of their stores from
 both.

*Sir Arthur
halts.*

Thus painfully circumstanced, Sir Arthur could not proceed.
 He conceived also that his engagement with Cuesta was fulfilled
 by the removal of Victor from the Alberche; for if advantage
 were duly taken of that movement, it gave the Spanish General
 possession of the course of the Tagus, and opened the communi-
 cation with La Mancha and Venegas. He halted from absolute
 necessity, and he determined even to return to Portugal, if he
 were not properly supplied. Cuesta appeared fully sensible of
 the propriety of this determination, and trusting that good for-
 tune would put him in possession of Madrid, which now seemed
 just within his reach, he, having means of transport in abundance,
 advanced four leagues in pursuit of Victor, to the village of
 Bravo; Sir Arthur, meantime, taking up a position at Talavera,

*Cuesta ad-
vances in
pursuit of
Victor.*

to wait the issue of a movement which was undertaken against his opinion, moved two divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, under General Sherbrooke, across the Alberche to Casalegas, to keep up the communication with Cuesta and with Sir Robert Wilson. Near that village the body of a Spanish peasant was found, whom the French soldiers had a little before burnt, or rather scorched to death. It lay with the arms lifted and the hands clenched, as if in the act of prayer, the features distorted, and the whole corpse stiffened in one dreadful expression of agony!

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Joseph Buonaparte and Marshal Jourdan left Madrid on the 23d, and halted that night at Navalcarnero, designing to form a junction with Victor at Casalegas, and to order Sebastiani thither as soon as that general, in pursuance of his instructions, should have returned from Consuegra and Madrilejos, where he was watching Venegas, to Toledo. Another object which Jourdan had in view was to check Sir Robert Wilson, whose force he supposed to be considerably greater than it was, and of whose enterprising spirit the French stood in fear. But Victor, who was well informed of the plans of his enemies, perceived, that if he fell back upon Navalcarnero to join the Intruder, it would be easy to interpose between them and Sebastiani, in which case the junction of their whole force in this quarter would be rendered exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. Apprising Joseph, therefore, of his movements, he retreated to the left bank of the Guadarrama, at its confluence with the Tagus near Toledo. Sebastiani reached that city the same day, and the Intruder, marching to the same point, fixed his head-quarters at Vargas, two leagues distant, so that the whole force which he could bring against the allies was now united. It consisted of 45,000 men, after 3000 were left to defend Toledo. They resolved immediately, now that this great

*Junction of
Joseph and
Sebastiani
with Victor.*

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CHAP. XXIV. object was effected, to act upon the offensive; and on the next day they began their march to Torrejos.

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*Cuesta's
vanguard
attacked by
the French.*

Cuesta had by this time advanced to St. Olalla. He there learnt that Victor had turned off towards Toledo; and so far was he from divining the obvious intent of such a movement, that he supposed the French were in full retreat, and that he had nothing to do but to pursue them. From some strange misconception, too, he supposed the English were about to follow him; they were very short of provisions and means of conveyance, he informed his own government, but he was doing all in his power to persuade them of the necessity of putting themselves in motion. He thus deceived himself and his government, instead of making efforts to supply the wants of the English army, or assisting them with his own means of transport. These he possessed in sufficient quantity; and it was discovered when too late, that food in abundance might have been procured, had proper means been used for obtaining it. In the morning of the 25th Cuesta dispatched intelligence that he was in pursuit of the French; in the evening he discovered that he was in some danger of being attacked by them, and on the following day his out-posts were assailed in Torrejos, and driven in. General Zayas advanced with the vanguard to meet the French; he was attacked by Latour Maubourg, with the French advanced guard, and suffered considerable loss; but Zayas was a good officer, and maintained his ground against superior numbers while he sent to require support. Alburquerque had requested that his division might be the first to support the vanguard, either in case of its attacking the enemy or being attacked. While Cuesta made arrangements for the retreat of the whole army beyond the Alberche, the Duque advanced time enough to save Zayas from complete rout, and the army from that utter defeat which

*Alburquerque
saves
Cuesta
from defeat.*

must necessarily have resulted. The vanguard was flying at the moment when he arrived; he charged the enemy, checked them, and gave the van time to re-form, and fall back in good order. But for this timely success the army would have been dispersed, for all the artillery and baggage were in the streets of St. Olalla, carts of bread were there also blocking up the way, the commissaries had taken flight, and the men, catching that panic which want of order in an army never fails to occasion on the first approach of danger, had begun to throw away their arms, that they might neither be incumbered with them in running away, nor supposed to be soldiers if they were overtaken.

Alburquerque would have pursued his success had he not been compelled to retreat by repeated orders from the commander-in-chief, at the moment when he was about to attack a disheartened enemy, with troops confident in their own courage and in the skill of their leader, and heated by the advantage which they had gained. He had, however, done much in saving the army, for never were the movements of an army conducted in a more wretched and disorderly manner; like a rabble upon a pilgrimage, such was Alburquerque's description, they proceeded without any regard to distance, order, or method, and with the whole park of artillery; they had neither provisions, staff, nor settled plan; and they stopped upon their marches to repose like flocks of sheep, without taking up any position, so that, if the French had known the condition they were in, defeat must have been inevitable whenever they were unexpectedly attacked. Saved from that total dispersion which must have ensued, had not Alburquerque thus checked the French in their career, the Spanish army retreated twenty miles from St. Olalla to the Alberche unmolested, thus again forming a junction with the British, and bivouacked on the left bank. At day-break Sir Arthur crossed, and having with some difficulty

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Cuesta retreats to the Alberche

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*July.**Sir Arthur
prevails on
him to cross
that river.*

penetrated to the old General's tent, found him asleep there, and the army in that state of disorder which is usually consequent upon a forced retreat. He pointed out the necessity of passing the river without loss of time, and taking up his ground on the right of the British position. Fortunately Cuesta yielded to this advice, although he thought it unlikely that the enemy would venture to attack them: there was a report that they had detached 15,000 men towards Madrid, and this strengthened his opinion. In fact, had Venegas performed his part of the concerted operations, either this must have been done by the French, or Madrid would have fallen. But though this General was under Cuesta's orders, and had been instructed how to act in pursuance of the plan arranged with the British Commander, counter orders were sent him by the Supreme Junta; and he, in consequence, disconcerted the whole arrangement by employing himself in a useless cannonade of Toledo; thus permitting the French to bring their whole force against the allies.

*Position of
the allies in
front of Ta-
lavera.*

Sir Arthur, as soon as the Spaniards fell back to the Alberche, expected a general action, and immediately prepared for it, recalling Sherbrooke from Casalegas to his station in the line. The position extended something more than two miles. The British were on the left; there the ground was open, and commanded by a height upon which a division of infantry was stationed under Major-General Hill. Still farther upon the left was a low range of mountains separated from the height by a valley about 300 fathoms wide, and here a ravine running from north to south covered the left and centre of the position, and terminated at the beginning of the olive grounds on the right. The valley was not occupied, because it was commanded by the height, and because the mountains were thought too distant to be of any consequence in the expected battle. The right, consisting of Spaniards, extended immediately in front of Talavera

down to the Tagus: this part of the ground was covered with olive trees, and much intersected by banks and ditches. The high road leading from the town to the bridge of Alberche was defended by a heavy battery in front of the Ermida, or chapel of Nuestra Señora del Prado, which was occupied by Spanish infantry. All the avenues to the town were defended in like manner; the town itself was occupied, and the remainder of the Spanish foot formed in two lines behind the banks, on the road which led to the position of the British. In the centre between the allied armies was a commanding spot, on which the British had begun to construct a redoubt. Brigadier-General Alexander Campbell was posted here with a division of infantry; and General Cotton's brigade of dragoons, with some Spanish cavalry, in the open ground in his rear.

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When Sherbrooke was recalled from Casalegas, General Mackenzie had been left with a division of infantry and a brigade of horse as an advanced post near Casa de Salinas, in a wood on the right of the Alberche, which covered the left of the British army. About two in the afternoon of the 27th the enemy appeared in strength on the left bank; Victor forded the Alberche, and before Mackenzie's division could be withdrawn from the wood on the left, it was attacked by very superior forces under Generals Lapisse and Chaudron Rousseau. Sir Arthur, from a tower immediately in their rear, which he had ascended for the purpose of observation, saw the men falter when about to be attacked by such overpowering numbers, and descending just in time, with difficulty mounted his horse in the midst of the affray, and escaped being made prisoner. Had he been taken at that moment, or had Marlborough, a century before, been recognised and detained when he fell into the hands of a French partisan on the Meuse, how differently would the latter days of Buonaparte and of Louis XIV. have closed, and how different at this

*Sir Arthur
nearly made
prisoner.*

CHAP. hour would have been the condition of England, of Europe, and
XXIV. of the world! The British suffered considerably, but they with-
1809. drew in perfect order, and took their place in the line. Mean-
July. time the other divisions of the French crossed, and advanced
Battle of within cannon-shot of the allied army. They cannonaded the
Talavera. left of the British position, and they attacked the Spanish in-
fantry with their horse, hoping to break through and win the
town; but they were bravely withstood and finally repulsed. The
action ceased a little before nine at night. A little before eleven
the first line of the Spanish left opened a tremendous fire; Sir Ar-
thur, who was near the spot, observed that the fire was admirably
well kept up, and hoped they would do as well next day; but as
he suspected that at that moment there was nothing to fire at,
he wished to stop it. While he was speaking, three battalions
of Spaniards, alarmed at their own noise, gave way, and fairly
took to their heels. The vacancy was promptly filled up; and
these very men the next day bore their full share of the battle,
and behaved as steadily as the best troops could have done.
Victor had marked the height on which General Hill was posted;
he considered it to be the key of the position, and thought
that, if he could beat the English from thence, it would be im-
possible for them to maintain the field afterwards. This might
best be done during the night. He, therefore, ordered Ruffin
to attack the hill with three regiments, Vilatte to support him,
and Lapisse to make a feint upon the centre of the allied
armies, which might serve as a diversion. The attack was made
soon after night had closed; for a moment it was successful,
and they got possession of the height. General Hill instantly
attacked them with the bayonet, and recovered the post. At
midnight the attempt was repeated, and failed again. Accord-
ing to the French account, one of the regiments destined for
this service lost its way, owing to the darkness, and another was

impeded by the ravine. Both sides suffered considerably at this well-contested point. The armies lay upon the field, the cavalry with their bridles round their arms; but there was little rest during the night; both sides were on the alert and alarm, and in different parts of the field the videttes of each army were sometimes fired on by their own countrymen, being mistaken for enemies. Whole battalions of the enemy got into the English line, some crying that they were Spaniards, some that they were German deserters: the trick was soon discovered, and, in the reception which they met with, it is not unlikely that many a poor German, who really intended to desert, lost his life. These night-engagements were carried on with the most determined fury; the men, after they had discharged their muskets, frequently closed, and fought with the butt-end.

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The French had ascertained, in the course of the evening, that any attack upon the town, posted as the Spaniards were, was hopeless; that the centre also was very strong, both from the rugged ground and the olive-yards which covered it, and the works which had been thrown up there. The left was the most practicable point of attack, and the difficulty of carrying that they had severely experienced. There, however, they made a third attempt at day-break, with three regiments under General Ruffin advancing in close columns. They proceeded triumphantly, as they supposed, nearly to the summit; when they were again charged and again beaten back, but they fell back in good order. Sir Arthur, for the better security of this post, now sent two brigades of horse into the valley on the left. Alburquerque had at this time been ordered by the Spanish commander to go with his cavalry to a place near the town, where it was impossible for them to act, and there was not even room for them, the ground being thickly wooded. On this occasion he ventured to act from his own judgement; observing that the

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English cavalry were charged by very superior numbers, he hastened to support them, and his opportune arrival enabled them to occupy the position. Cuesta perceived the advantage of this movement, and suffered the Duke to choose his own ground, who accordingly took the post of danger with the English horse. To annoy this body, the French sent their riflemen to the heights on the left of the valley; thus occupying the ground which Sir Arthur had supposed beyond the bounds to which the action would extend. It proved of no advantage to them; for Cuesta, marking the movement, dispatched Camp-marshal Bassecourt against them with the fifth division of Spanish infantry, and dislodged them with great loss.

About eleven, the enemy having been baffled in all their attempts, intermitted the attack, rested their troops, and, it is said, cooked their dinners upon the field. Wine and a little bread were served out to the British troops. A brook which flows into the Tagus separated the French and English in one part of the field, and during this pause men of both armies went there to drink, as if a truce had been established. Their muskets were laid down and their helmets put off while they stooped to the stream, and when they had quenched their thirst, they rested on the brink, looking at each other. The heat and exasperation of battle were suspended; they felt that mutual respect which proofs of mutual courage had inspired, and some of them shook hands across the brook, in token that although they were met to shed each other's blood, brave men knew how to value a brave enemy. At such a moment it was natural for Englishmen to have no other feeling;... the atrocities by which Buonaparte's soldiers in the Peninsula had disgraced their profession, their country, and their nature, were for the time forgotten. This interval also was taken for bringing off the wounded who lay intermingled as they had fallen. And here also a re-

deeming sense of humanity was manifested ; all hostility being suspended among those who were thus employed, and each striving who should with most alacrity assist the other in extricating the common sufferers. About noon Victor ordered a general attack along the whole line. His own three divisions were to attack the hill once more. Sebastiani was to form his first division in two lines on the left of Lapisse ; Leval, with a brigade just then arriving from Aranjuez, to be stationed to the left of this division, a little in the rear ; still further left, Milhaud, with his dragoons, was to observe Talavera ; Latour Maubourg's infantry and Merlin's light-horse formed in the rear of Victor to support his corps, and advance into the open ground now occupied by him, as soon as he should have won the hill. The reserve was placed in a third line behind Sebastiani's corps.

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From the moment this general attack commenced, the firing of musketry was heard on all sides like the roll of a drum, with scarcely a moment's interruption during the remainder of the day, the deeper sound of a heavy cannonade rising above it like thunder. The operations of the French were deranged by a blunder of Leval's division, which they attribute to the ruggedness of the ground, and the impossibility of preserving the line among the olive-trees and vines. Instead of forming in *echelon* in the rear, it advanced to the front, and before it had finished deploying it was attacked. Sebastiani sent a brigade to its support, and it fell back to the ground which it was designed to occupy. This occasioned some delay. When the line was formed, Sebastiani waited till Victor had begun the attack. Lapisse first crossed the ravine, supported by Latour Maubourg's cavalry, and by two batteries, each of eight pieces of cannon. Vilatte threatened the hills and covered the valley, and Ruffin, skirting the great chain of mountains to the left, endeavoured to turn

CHAP. the flank of the British army. The attack upon the hill was
 XXIV. exceedingly formidable, but, like all the former, it failed. La-
 1809. pisse was mortally wounded, his men were driven back, and
July. Victor himself rallied them, and brought them once more to the
 contested point; their retrograde movement had exposed Se-
 bastiani's right, and there also the French suffered considerably.

While Victor led his troops once more to the foot of that hill which had so often been fatal to the assailants, Vilatte with the columns in the valley advanced to his support. General Anson's brigade, consisting of the 1st German light dragoons and the 23d dragoons, with General Fane's heavy cavalry, were ordered to charge them. The French formed in two solid squares; they were protected by a deep ravine, which was not perceived till the horses were close to it; and they kept up a tremendous fire of artillery and musketry. This was the most destructive part of the whole action; numbers of men and horse fell into the ravine, . . . numbers were mown down. But the portion which got over were collected as well as he could by the Honourable Major Ponsonby, and led upon the bayonets of the enemy. They passed between two columns of infantry, against which they could effect nothing, then galloped upon the regiment of chasseurs which supported them. Here they were charged by some regiments in reserve, surrounded, broken, dispersed, and almost destroyed, losing two-thirds of their number. The rest (Lord William Russell was among them) passed through the intervals of the French columns, and retired within their own lines. Injudicious and unfortunate as the charge was, the desperate courage with which officers and men had advanced upon almost certain destruction astonished the enemy; it put an end to their efforts on that side, and no farther attempt was made upon the hill, which was now covered with dead, dying, wounded, and exhausted troops.

The attack upon the centre was made at the same time. General Campbell was supported by Eguia and Henestrosa, and by a regiment of Spanish horse; the allies repulsed the enemy, and while the Spaniards turned their flank, the English took their cannon. A column, chiefly consisting of Germans, advanced with excellent steadiness through a heavy fire of artillery, like men who, having obtained the highest military character, were resolved to keep it. They were received by Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke's men with a volley of musketry which staggered them; the whole British division then rushed forward with the bayonet, and by that irresistible charge the enemy were driven back with great slaughter. But the brigade of Guards advanced too far in pursuit; they were attacked by the French reserve, they were cut down by a close fire of artillery from a wood; in a few minutes all their mounted officers were killed, with more than 500 men, and at that moment the fate of the day appeared worse than doubtful. But Sir Arthur's foresight secured the victory which had been so long contested. Seeing the advance, and apprehending the consequence, he moved a battalion of the 48th from the heights to their support; and this timely succour, with the assistance of the second line of General Cotton's cavalry, saved the brigade from that total destruction which must else have been inevitable. The broken Guards passed through the intervals of the 48th, re-formed behind it, and then in their turn supported the regiment which had preserved them. Upon their advance, the enemy, whose heart now failed them, retired: the Guards renewed the huzzas with which they had advanced, and the cry was taken up along the whole line. It was the shout of victory on the part of the allies; for though the light troops continued to fire, and from time to time a heavy cannonade was renewed, the enemy made no further attempt.

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A circumstance more horrid than unfrequent in war occurred toward the close of the action; the long dry grass took fire, and many of the wounded were scorched to death. It was night before the battle ended, and the allies were far from certain that it would not be renewed on the morrow. The moon rose dimly, the night was chill and damp because of the heavy dew; the troops lay in position on the ground, without covering, and without food; even water was scarce; but the officers and the generals were faring alike, and neither murmuring was heard for their privations, nor apprehension felt for what the morrow might bring forth. The French had made large fires along the whole front of their line. At daylight the troops were under arms, and in order of battle, . . . but the enemy had disappeared, a rear-guard only being in sight on the left of the Alberche. The Intruder had been a spectator of the whole action. During the night contradictory reports were brought him, some affirming that another attack must ensure the victory, others that Victor's right had been turned, and he could not possibly keep his ground. In this dilemma Joseph sent to ascertain which was the true report, and retired to rest, in expectation of having the favourable one confirmed, the reserve bivouacking round him. At daybreak he was awakened by Sebastiani, who had fallen back with his corps upon the reserve during the night, and who came with tidings that he had been compelled to make this retrograde movement, because Victor was retreating along the foot of the hills to Casalegas. This intelligence left no time for deliberation. The Intruder began to retreat also, but in perfect order; Milhaud's division formed the rear, and Latour Maubourg brought off many of the wounded. Twenty pieces of cannon were taken by the conquerors; the prisoners were not many.

Our loss had been very heavy; 801 killed, 3913 wounded,

653 missing. The Spaniards had 1250 killed and wounded. Generals Mackenzie and Langworth fell. Two bullets passed through Sir Arthur's clothes, and he received a severe contusion on the shoulder from a spent musket-ball. During the second action no attack was made upon the main body of Cuesta's army; the position was too strong, and the French rightly judged, that if, by bringing their whole force to bear upon the English, they could defeat them, Cuesta's discomfiture must necessarily follow. On this day, therefore, they were in the proportion of more than two to one to the troops whom they engaged. The British entered the field 18,300 effective men; they were opposed to not less than 48,000. The presence of the Spaniards was of vital importance, by the security which they afforded to the right of our army; and essential service was afforded by those who came into action on the second day, especially by Alburquerque and Bassecourt, and by two battalions under Brigadier-General Whittingham, in their service, who came forward to support the Guards; but the brunt of the battle was borne by the British, as the loss which they sustained evinces. From their loss that of the defeated enemy might fairly be computed, if the numbers left upon the field had not afforded surer ground. Both Spaniards and English state it at not less than 10,000 men; the number of their dead was so great, that Cuesta ordered out his troops by battalions to burn them.

The Spaniards, where they were well commanded, behaved well; but melancholy proofs were given of the inefficient state of their armies. The whole of their commissariat took flight as soon as the action began, with all the people belonging to them; so that after the battle the allies found themselves in total want of food and resources. Three or four corps threw down their muskets without having once discharged them, and dispersed; some of them plundered the baggage. Cuesta was so indignant

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*Cuesta decimates
some of his
troops.*

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at this, that after the action he ordered the division to be decimated, and it was only after much entreaty from the British Commander that he consented to re-decimate those on whom the lot had fallen, and six officers and some thirty men were actually executed. Sir Arthur remarked upon this occasion, with equal humanity and wisdom, that fear of disgrace would affect the Spaniards more than fear of death, and that for this reason, among others, exertions ought to be made for clothing them in uniform. Marching to battle as they did, without any thing to distinguish them for soldiers, in the first panic they threw away their arms and accoutrements, and pretended to be peasants. Men dressed as soldiers could not thus at once put off the marks of their profession, and that being the case, they would feel that their safety depended upon keeping their arms and standing their ground; and when the whole army was uniformly clothed, it would be easy to deprive the soldier who should misbehave of a part of his uniform, or to fix upon him some mark of disgrace, . . . a mode of punishment, he said, the most effectual as well as the most humane. Cuesta had just experienced the good effect of such measures; the regiments whom he deprived of one of their pistols for misconduct at the battle of Medellin, behaved so well from that time, and exerted themselves so strenuously on all occasions to wipe off their disgrace, that, after the battle of Talavera, the pistol was restored to them.

*State of
Talavera.*

The wounded of both armies were brought in promiscuously, and many of them laid in the streets and in the squares till shelter could be allotted for them: even for this inevitable necessity no order having been taken by the Spanish authorities. It is worthy of notice, that a greater proportion recovered of those who were left a night upon the field, than of such as were earlier housed, and this is explained by the effect of the free air in preventing fever. Needful accommodations for these poor

creatures were not to be found in a city which the French had visited. They had destroyed the public buildings, overturned the altars, and opened the tombs. Furniture of every kind they had carried off to their camp, and what they had no other use for, they had consumed as fuel. Frenchmen like, they had a theatre in their camp. The soldiers' huts were so remarkable for neatness and regularity, as to be an object of curiosity to the British officers; but it was remarked as one proof of the wanton destruction caused by the Intruder's armies, that they were all thatched with unthreshed straw. It ought to be mentioned as a contrast to this, that when the British troops halted by day or night amid olive-groves, they were not allowed to cut the trees either for fuel or for shelter.

The day after the action a light brigade, 3000 strong, and a troop of horse-artillery, under Brigadier-general Craufurd, arrived from Lisbon to reinforce the British army, which thus found itself nearly as strong as before the action. But a battle so well contested, and so gloriously won, was rendered of no avail, by the complicated misconduct of the Spanish government and of the Spanish general. The same want of provisions and of the means of transport, which had compelled Sir Arthur to halt at Talavera, prevented him from pursuing his victory. The Intruder, ignorant of this, trembled for Madrid, expecting every hour to hear that Venegas, Sir R. Wilson, and the combined forces were marching upon that city, where the people were looking out for their deliverers. Sir Robert had proceeded with his corps to Navalcarneiro, notwithstanding the immediate neighbourhood of the enemy's army. The detachment reached the Guadarrama: he had established a communication with Madrid, Belliard was preparing to withdraw from the city into the Retiro, which had been fortified as a citadel, and Sir Robert had made arrangements for entering the metropolis on the night of

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*Movements
of Sir R.
Wilson.*

CHAP. that very day when he and his corps were recalled, because a
 XXIV. general action was expected. Some insurrectionary movements
 1809. had already appeared, which Belliard had been able to suppress;
July. but it was certain that the moment an army came to the assist-
 ance of the citizens, he would no longer be able to keep them
 down. Joseph's hope, therefore, was from an attack upon the
 rear of the allies, to be made by the collected forces of Soult,
 Ney, and Mortier, under command of the former.

*Movements
 of Soult,
 Ney, and
 Mortier.*

Soult, after his retreat from Galicia, occupied Zamora, Sala-
 manca, and Leon, with the remains of his army, which he had
 found means to re-equip. Ney's corps was quartered at Astorga,
 Benevente, and Leon; Mortier's at Medina del Campo, and
 Valladolid. Apprised of the movements of the English, Soult
 gave orders on the 20th for collecting the whole at Salamanca,
 and four days afterwards was instructed by Jourdan, in the In-
 truder's name, to advance as speedily as possible upon the rear
 of the enemy by way of Plasencia. Sir Arthur, from the com-
 mencement of the campaign, was aware of the existence of this
 force in the north, and the manner in which it would attempt to
 act. His own army was so small that it was not possible for him
 to spare detachments for securing the passes of the long moun-
 tain-ridge which the French must cross. But Cuesta had sent
 the Marquess de la Reyna, with two battalions from his own army
 and two from Bejar, to occupy the Puerto de Baños, and given
 orders to the Duque del Parque to secure the Puerto de Perales,
 by detachments from Ciudad Rodrigo. The former point Sir
 Arthur considered safe; but, doubting the Duque's power to spare
 a sufficient force for the latter, he directed Beresford, with the
 Portuguese troops, to defend this pass, as the greatest service
 which, in their then state of discipline, they were capable of
 performing.

*Cuesta ne-
 glects to se-
 cure the
 passes.*

Two days after the battle, intelligence was brought to Tala-

vera that 12,000 rations had been ordered at Fuente Duenas for the 28th, and 24,000 at Los Santos on the same day, for a French army, which it was supposed was on its march to the Puerto de Baños. Cuesta upon this discovered some anxiety respecting that post, and proposed that Sir R. Wilson with his corps should be sent thither. This could not be assented to, for his corps was stationed in the mountains towards Escalona, still keeping up a communication with the people of Madrid, . . an advantage too important to be foregone. Of this Cuesta appeared sensible; yet he could not be prevailed upon to send a detachment from his own army; and Sir Arthur, considering that they had no other grounds for believing this was the point which was threatened than that the rations were ordered, which might be a feint, and hoping too that the troops already there might prove sufficient, and even that the news of his late victory might deter the French from proceeding, did not press the Spanish general farther that day. Night brought with it the anxious feeling that a point had now become of prime importance, concerning which he could not be satisfied that proper means had been taken for its defence; and in the morning he again pressed Cuesta upon the subject, urging him to detach thither a division of infantry, with its guns, and a commanding officer on whom he could rely. "Certainly," he declared, "he never would have advanced so far, if reason had not been given him to believe that pass was secure. The division would not be missed at Talavera; if it arrived in time it would perform a service of the greatest moment; and even if the enemy should have crossed the mountains before its arrival, it would then be in a situation to observe him." But Cuesta was not to be persuaded. That day and the following elapsed; on the third came tidings that the French had entered Bejar; and then the Spanish general dis-

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*Intelligence
of Soult's
advance.*

July 31.

CHAP. patched Bassecourt with a force which might have sufficed had
XXIV. it been sent in time.

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August.

*Soult oc-
cupies Pla-
sencia.*

Mortier began his march from Salamanca on the 27th, Soult followed on the 30th, Ney two days afterwards, all taking the same route. The advance fell in with the Marquess de la Reyna's out-posts at La Calzala, and pursued them to Bejar and Col de Baños. The two battalions on which Cuesta had relied before the appearance of danger, consisted of only 600 men, supplied with twenty rounds of ammunition! Even this was more than they employed; they attempted to blow up the bridge called Cuesper de Hombre, and failing in that, retired without firing a shot. The battalions of Bejar dispersed as soon as they saw the enemy. Yet such was the strength of this position, that the very sight of the Spaniards delayed Mortier's march, in consequence of the dispositions which he thought it necessary to make for forcing it if it had been defended, and he did not enter Plasencia till the first of August. The occupation of that place was of the greatest importance; the French had now intercepted Sir Arthur's communication with Portugal, and were enabled to manœuvre upon his rear if he advanced toward Madrid, or remained at Talavera.

*Sir Arthur
marches a-
gainst him.*

Cuesta now proposed that half the British army should march against Soult, while the other half maintained the post at Talavera. Sir Arthur said he was ready either to go or stay with the whole British army, but he would not divide it; the choice was left to him, and he preferred going, thinking his own troops were most likely to accomplish the object of the march, perhaps even without a contest. It appears that he was not aware of the enemy's force: Cuesta estimated it at twelve or fourteen thousand, and Sir Arthur did not at that time suppose it to be larger. He preferred the alternative of going for another reason

also, feeling it of more importance to him that the communication through Plasencia should be opened than it was to the Spaniards, though highly important to them also. The movements of Victor in front induced him to suppose that the enemy, despairing of any better success at Talavera than they had already experienced, intended to fall upon Sir R. Wilson, and force a passage by Escalona : thus to act in concert with Soult between the Alberche and the Tietar. Sir Robert also felt himself seriously menaced, and some letters which he intercepted gave him sufficient information to ascertain that these were the plans of the enemy ; he therefore informed the British General that he should remove his artillery to St. Roman, occupy the Panada with 300 men, a strong height behind Montillo with 600 more, from whence there was a good retreat to St. Valuela, and return with the rest to a position, in readiness either to occupy Valuela, or obey such instructions as he might receive. In this state of things, Sir Arthur perceived how possible it was that Cuesta might be forced to quit Talavera before he could return to it, and this made him uneasy for his hospital. At all events, he thought it too far advanced. He therefore entreated Cuesta to make a requisition for carts, and remove the wounded as expeditiously as was consistent with their safety, by first sending them to an intermediate station at no great distance, from whence they might gradually be passed to the place which should ultimately be fixed upon. He wrote to Bassecourt, requesting that he, with that division which had been dispatched to secure the passes after they had been lost, would halt at Centiello, and watch the vale of Plasencia ; and he again recommended to the Spanish commander, that Venegas should be ordered to threaten Madrid by the road of Arganda, that being the only means whereby it was possible to alarm the enemy, and make him divide his forces.

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*Cuesta de-
termines to
follow Sir
Arthur.*

Having thus taken every precaution, he marched to Oropesa, with the intention of either compelling Soult to retreat, or giving him battle. At five in the evening he learned that the enemy were at Naval Moral, not more than eighteen miles distant; thus having placed themselves between him and the bridge of Almaraz, as if they meant to cut off his retreat across the Tagus. An hour afterwards dispatches came from Talavera, inclosing an intercepted letter from Jourdan to Soult, wherein the latter was told that the British army was at least 25,000 strong, and yet he was ordered to bring it to action wherever he could find it; from this Cuesta inferred that Soult could not have less than 30,000 men, and this was the precise number at which the friar, on whom the letter had been found, stated his army. But the most grievous part of the intelligence was, that Victor was again advancing, and had reached St. Olalla, and that Cuesta, seeing himself threatened both in front and in flank, and apprehending the British would require assistance, was determined to march and join them. Painful as it was thus to abandon the wounded, he considered that he must have abandoned them if he were driven from the position, and that position being now open on the left, he did not think himself able to maintain it. Sir Arthur immediately wrote to represent that the danger was far less imminent than Cuesta apprehended; the enemy, he thought, were not likely to attack Talavera, nor to occupy the British long. It would be time to march when they knew that the French had forced their way at Escalona, or were breaking up from St. Olalla. Victor was certainly alone, and Sebastiani and the Intruder occupied by Venegas. At all events he urged him to delay his march till the next day, send off his commissariat and baggage before him, and halt in the woods till the wounded were arrived at the bridge of Arzobispo. Soult's force, he said, was certainly overrated.

Sir Arthur's mistake upon this subject arose from his being ignorant that Mortier had formed a junction with this army. He supposed that it consisted only of the corps of Soult and Ney, who had brought out of Galicia 18,000 men, the remains of 36,000 with which they entered that country. Cuesta, however, was better informed; and he himself altered his opinion of the enemy's force when he considered the positive orders which the Intruder had given for attacking the British army, supposing it to consist of 25,000 men. Cuesta had not asked Sir Arthur's advice, and did not wait to receive it: he left Talavera before it reached him, marched all night, and joined the British at Oropesa soon after daylight on the 4th. His apprehension of danger to himself was well founded: it was not without great exertions and heavy loss that the combined armies had repulsed the French at Talavera; well, therefore, might he despair of withstanding them alone if they returned to the attack. But the danger which by this hasty retreat he averted from himself, he brought upon Venegas and Sir Arthur; and the latter, in addition to the mortification of having his wounded fall into the hands of the enemy, saw himself exposed to an attack in front and in rear at the same time by two armies, each superior to his own. It was absolutely necessary to retreat, otherwise nothing but two victories could extricate the troops from their perilous situation, and they were little capable of extraordinary exertions, not having had their full allowance of provisions for several days. The bridge of Almaraz had been destroyed, and when the Marques de la Reyna abandoned his post at the pass, he made for this point, with the intention of removing the bridge of boats that had been placed there; the boats indeed might be still in the river, but it was thought impossible to reach Almaraz without a battle. If he moved on to give the enemy battle, the French from Talavera would break down the bridge of Arzo-

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August.*Cuesta joins
the British.**They re-
treat across
the Tagus.*

CHAP. bispo, and thus intercept the only way by which a retreat was
 XXIV. practicable; the same danger would be incurred if he took a
 1809. position at Oropesa. Nothing remained, therefore, but to cross
 August. at Arzobispo, while it was yet in his power, and take up a de-
 fensive post upon the Tagus: the sooner a defensive line should
 be taken, the more likely were the troops to be able to defend
 it. On the day, therefore, that Cuesta formed his unfortunate
 junction, Sir Arthur retreated by this route, and crossed. Cuesta
 followed on the night of the 5th.

*Col. Mac-
 kinnon re-
 moves some
 of the
 wounded.*

Sir Arthur had left Colonel Mackinnon in command at Talavera with the charge of the sick and wounded, amounting, with those attached to the hospital, to about 5000 persons. On the evening of one day the charge had been given him, and on the next at noon Cuesta informed him that Soult was at Plasencia with 30,000 men, and that Victor was in his front, only six leagues distant; the monk who discovered their plans, being the bearer of a letter from the Intruder to Soult, was in the room: it was his intention to retire at dusk with the Spanish army and join Sir Arthur, and the hospital had better be got off before that time. Colonel Mackinnon had been instructed, in case of such necessity, to make for Merida by way of the Puente del Arzobispo: but it was with difficulty he could procure from Cuesta seven waggons to remove a few of the wounded. There was no alternative but to recommend those whom there was no possibility of removing to the honour and humanity of the French commanders; and Colonel Mackinnon, who had lived in France, and was in every respect one of the most accomplished officers in the British army, did this in a manner which was believed to have had great effect in obtaining for them the humane and honourable treatment they received. All who were able to march were ordered to assemble at three that afternoon, and proceed to Calera that night, . . . a town which the French had

completely destroyed. The next day they were overtaken at Arzobispo by the British army, and instead of passing the night there, as had been intended, were ordered to proceed. Forty bullock-cars were added to their means of transport, but in such ill repair for some of the worst roads in the world, that only eleven of them reached Deleitosa. A more difficult six days' march could hardly be conceived, and the difficulty was of a kind more trying to a brave and feeling mind than danger. There was only a commissary's clerk to provide for them, and the runaway Spaniards were plundering the small magazines in all the villages. Reports that the French had crossed the Tagus, and were in their front, alarmed his men, who were in no condition for the field, and many of them took to the mountains. Mackinnon mustered his force in a convent near Deleitosa; it consisted then of 2000 men, and these he conducted to Elvas, without magazines, with no assistance from the magistrates, who, on the contrary, sometimes evinced a hostile disposition; and with such want of humanity on the part of the people (made callous by selfishness, and selfish by necessity), that he was often obliged to use violent means, or the men must have been starved.

The British army was now stationed at Deleitosa, whence they could defend the point of Almaraz and the lower parts of the Tagus. Cuesta remained at Arzobispo; but so little in concert with Sir Arthur, that he moved his head-quarters, and suffered three days to elapse without sending him any information of his plans or movements. On the night of the 7th he removed to Peraleda de Garbin, leaving two divisions of infantry and Albuquerque's division of cavalry to defend the passage of the river. This was an imprudent measure, for the enemy were in force on the left bank; they had already attempted to win the bridge, and were now erecting batteries. The bridge was barricaded, and defended by several batteries with embrasures con-

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August.*Defeat of
the Spaniards at Ar-
zobispo.*

CHAP. XXIV. 1809. August. nected by a covered way, and upon these works the general relied with such confidence, that he thought he might safely withdraw the greater part of his army to more convenient quarters. Cuesta ought to have understood the nature of this post; he had been blamed for abandoning it in the former part of the year: satisfied, however, with having fortified the bridge, he never thought of examining whether the river might not be fordable. Mortier, who commanded the corps of the French which led the pursuit, erected batteries to call off the attention of the Spaniards, while he ordered the chief of his staff, Dombrowsky, with two good swimmers, to sound the Tagus. His officer of engineers had observed, that when the Spanish horse were brought to drink they went some way into the river; trial was made where this indication promised some hope of success, and a good ford, passable even for infantry, was found there, not two hundred yards above the bridge and the Spanish batteries. Soult, who had now come up, resolved to effect the passage in the heat of the day, when the Spaniards would be taking their mid-day sleep, and might be surprised. He calculated upon a carelessness which he was sure to find. The Spaniards relied upon the river for their defence, never having deemed it needful to ascertain how far it might be relied on: the passage was accomplished almost as soon as they were aware of the attempt; the works of the bridge were taken in the rear, some of the Spanish artillerymen were cut down at their guns, and others, in a manner not to be justified by any laws of war, were compelled to turn them upon their countrymen; the works were presently demolished, and the way opened for Girard's infantry. Alburquerque's cavalry were reposing under some trees, a short league from the scene of action; at the first alarm they hastened to support their countrymen; and their charge was made with such resolution and effect, that Soult is said to

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*Operations
de M. Soult,
521.*

*Naylies,
174.*

*Naylies,
175.*

have thought of firing grape upon them through his own men, as the only means of repelling them. But succours came to the French in time for preventing this atrocious expedient; and the Spaniards, horse and foot alike, retreated, or rather fled through a mountainous country, which favoured their escape, leaving their ammunition, their baggage, and the whole of their artillery. The slain were estimated by the French at 1600 men, most of whom were cut down in a pursuit from which the enemy returned with every man his sabre red with blood. Some of the French were drowned in the passage, their other loss was trifling. The same frightful circumstance as at Talavera occurred after the action; the herbage took fire; the wind spread the flames far and wide, among stubble, dry shrubs, and groves of ilex and of olives; . . on all sides the cries of the wounded were heard; and through the night muskets which the fugitives had thrown away went off, cartridges took fire, and cassoons of artillery exploded.

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August.*Naylies,*
177.*Movements
of Marshal
Ney.*

The commonest precaution might have saved the Spaniards from this defeat, in which, though the loss of men was not great, that of artillery and ammunition was considerable, and the moral effect upon the troops of more importance than either. It seems, indeed, that Soult advanced to Arzobispo in the sole hope of profiting by the negligence of the Spanish commanders to strike some such blow; for the enemy had no intention at this time of carrying the war into Extremadura, finding Almaraz too well defended, and the fords, which were said to exist below the bridge, impassable. Ney had formed the design of crossing them, and taking possession of the defiles of Deleitosa and Xaraicejo, thus to cut off the retreat of the English toward Portugal; but those points were secured by Sir Arthur, as well as the passage of the river, and the French Marshal was ordered back to Salamanca to secure that part of the country, in concert with Kellermann, against the Duque del Parque and the Conde

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August.*Action with
Sir R. Wil-
son at the
Puerto de
Baños.*

de Noroña, who had been prevented from occupying the enemy on that side for want of artillery and cavalry; the former, however, was now beginning to act on the offensive. Ney began his march on the 9th to the Puerto de Baños, in his way towards Old Castille; and this brought him in contact with Sir Robert Wilson.

When the British commander left Talavera, Cuesta's advanced guard was in communication with Sir Robert, and that officer was informed of the intended retreat of the Spaniards, that he might in like manner fall back. But he was advanced too far for this to be practicable; after a long march through the mountains, he found himself, on the night of the 14th, six leagues from Arzobispo; the high road between Oropesa and Talavera was to be crossed, and Victor was in possession of Talavera; thinking it, therefore, too late to reach Arzobispo, he determined to move by Puerto de San Julien and Centinello, and cross the Tietar toward the mountains. On the 11th he reached Baños, and had set out the following morning on the road of Grenadilla, to restore by this route his communication with the allied armies, when a cloud of dust was perceived on the road of Plasencia, and a peasant assured him it proceeded from a body of the enemy. Readily believing what was so probable, he turned back, and took post in front of Baños, placing 200 Spanish infantry under Colonel Grant in advance of Aldea Nueva. The enemy's chasseurs and voltigeurs advanced in considerable bodies under General Lorset; and Grant, after a resistance in which the Spaniards demeaned themselves gallantly, was compelled to fall back. The French then attempted to cut off Sir Robert's own legion, which was posted between Aldea Nueva and Baños: he had strengthened his position by every means which the time allowed, so that they could only advance gradually, and with severe loss from the fire of musketry which was

kept up upon them. At length part of the Merida battalion on the right gave way, and a road was thus left open by which the position might have been turned. Then Sir Robert ordered a retreat upon the heights above Baños, and from thence sent to secure the road of Monte Mayor, which turned the Puerto de Baños, a league in the rear, and by which the French were directing a column. Don Carlos d'Espagna came up at this time with his battalion of light infantry, took post along the heights commanding the road to Baños, and enabled Sir Robert to detach a party to the mountain on the left, commanding the main road. On the Extremadura side this Puerto is not a pass of such strength as on the side of Castille. Sir Robert had no artillery, and the French were not less than treble the number of his troops; nevertheless he maintained his ground for nine hours. At six in the evening three columns of the enemy succeeded in gaining the height on the left; his post was then no longer tenable, and he retired along the mountains, leaving open the main road, along which a considerable column of cavalry immediately hastened. It came in sight of the battalion of Seville, which had been left at Bejar with orders to follow on the morrow; but when Sir Robert was obliged to retire, and the action commenced, he ordered it to the pass to watch the Monte Mayor road and the heights on the rear of his left. As soon as the French cavalry came nigh, an officer with some dragoons rode on, and called out to the Spanish commanders to surrender. They were answered by a volley that killed the whole party; the Spaniards then began to mount the heights; they were attacked and surrounded by two bodies, one of horse, the other of foot; but they succeeded in cutting their way through, and Ney, having forced the pass, hastened on to Salamanca. Sir Robert's loss was not considerable, and after halting

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CHAP. two days at Miranda de Castañas, to rest his men, and collect
 XXIV. those who were dispersed, he proceeded on his way.

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*The French
 enter Talavera.*

*Victor behaves well to
 the English wounded.*

The retreat of Cuesta from Talavera, however much both the former and subsequent conduct of that general may deserve censure, was, under his circumstances, at least an excusable measure. About 1500 of the wounded were left, whom there was no time to remove; most of whom, indeed, were not in a state to bear removal. Cuesta had hardly begun his march before the French were in sight. When Victor entered the town he found some of the wounded, French and English alike, lying on the ground in the Plaza. After complimenting the English, and observing that they understood the laws and courtesies of war, he told them there was one thing which they did not understand, and that was how to deal with the Spaniards. He then sent soldiers to every house, with orders to the inhabitants immediately to receive and accommodate the wounded of the two nations, who were lodged together, one English and one Frenchman; and he expressly directed that the Englishman should always be served first. Many had already died in the square, and the stones were covered with blood; Victor ordered the townsmen to come with spades and besoms, remove and bury the dead, and cleanse the Plaza; he was speedily obeyed, and then the French said the place was fit for them to walk in. This was done a few hours after they entered the town. The next day the troops were assembled at noon, and liberty of pillaging for three hours was allowed them. Every man was provided with a hammer and a small saw for this purpose in his knapsack, and they filed off by beat of drum in regular parties to the different quarters of the town upon this work, as a business with which they were well acquainted. Nothing escaped their search: they discovered corn enough to supply the French army for

three months; these magazines had been concealed both from the Spanish and English generals, and the owners were now punished for their treachery to their countrymen and their allies, by the loss of the whole. Dollars enough to load eight mules were also found hidden beneath some broken wheels and rubbish in a yard belonging to one of the convents.

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The behaviour of Victor to the wounded English deserves more especially to be mentioned, because Soult was carrying on the war with unrelenting barbarity. From Plasencia he laid waste the fertile vale in which that city stands with fire and sword. Serradilla, Pasanon, Arroyo-Molinos, El Barrado, Garganta la Olla, Texada, Riobobos, Malpartida, and La Oliva, were burnt by his troops, who, when they were not otherwise employed, went out upon the highways, robbed every person whose ill fortune compelled them to travel in this miserable country, and usually killed those whom they robbed. D. Juan Alvarez de Castro, the Bishop of Coria, in his eighty-sixth year, was murdered by these wretches. When Lapisse, in the month of June, marched from Salamanca to Alcantara, the Bishop with great difficulty and fatigue escaped; but the hardships which he then underwent were too much for one in such extreme old age, and when Soult quartered himself in this part of the country, he was confined to his bed, in the village of Los Hoyos. Had he been removed he must have died upon the road; it was, therefore, not a matter of choice but of necessity that he should remain and take his chance. Three of his clergy and some of his domestics remained with him; and a few old men took refuge under the same roof, thinking the presence of their venerable pastor would render it a safe asylum. The French entered the village, and took possession of the house where the old prelate lay in bed. His chaplains met them, and intreated protection for their spiritual father, and his domestics waited upon them,

*Murder of
the Bishop
of Coria.*

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hoping to obtain favour, or at least to escape injury. But after these ruffians had eaten and drank what was set before them, they plundered the house of every thing which could be converted to their own use, and destroyed whatever they could not carry away. Then they fell upon the unhappy people of the house, one of whom they killed, and wounded six others; lastly, they dragged the Bishop from his bed, and discharged two muskets into his body.

*Venegas's
army kept
in inaction
before and
after the
battle of
Talavera.*

The plans of the enemy on the side of Extremadura were effected; they who had so lately trembled for Madrid had seen the allied armies recross the Tagus, and they gave themselves credit for the fortunate issue of a campaign, in which, if it had not been for the misconduct of the Spanish General and of the Central Junta, they must have been driven to the Ebro. On the side of La Mancha they were not less successful. Venegas, on the 14th of July, had received orders to occupy the attention of the enemy, and divert them from the allied armies as much as possible, without endangering himself. In consequence he advanced his army from El Moral, Ynfanles, Puerto Elano, and Valdepeñas, to Damiel, La Solana, El Corral de Caraquel, and Manzanares, keeping his head-quarters still at Santa Cruz de Mudela, and expecting intelligence which would justify him in advancing to Consuegra and Madrilejos. At this time he supposed it was the intention of the combined armies to march upon Madrid; and when the want both of provisions and means of transport rendered it impossible for the British army to proceed, Cuesta gave him no intelligence of this, thereby exposing him to be destroyed, if the French, instead of marching upon Talavera, had directed their attack against him. Cuesta's whole conduct respecting the British army was so utterly unreasonable, that it can only be accounted for by ascribing it to obstinacy and incapacity. The wants of the British army were palpable;

he had them before his eyes, and could at any moment have satisfied himself of the truth of every complaint which he received; yet he concealed the real state of things both from his own government and from Venegas, to both of whom it was of such essential importance that they should be accurately informed. The Spanish government received true intelligence from Mr. Frere, and in consequence they dispatched a courier to Venegas, directing him to suspend his operations, and take up a defensive position. Cuesta's neglect rendered it prudent to dispatch these orders; but one evil produced another. Two hours after the arrival of the courier, Venegas received intelligence of the victory of Talavera, which was the more unexpected, because the Intruder, true to the French system, had published an extraordinary gazette, stating that he had defeated the allied armies on the 26th. Venegas ordered Te Deum to be sung in the neighbouring churches, and celebrated the victory by a general discharge: but he failed to improve it; and, instead of considering that the circumstances under which the Junta had dictated his instructions were now entirely changed, he adhered strictly to them, and lost the opportunity of advancing to Madrid; thus consummating the series of blunders by which a campaign so well planned, and a victory so bravely won, were rendered fruitless. Had he pushed for that city immediately, he might have entered it; Sir Robert Wilson would have joined him there, the resources of the city would have been secured for the allies, and the recovery of the capital would have raised the whole country far and near against the French. If Alburquerque had commanded this army, the momentous opportunity would not have been lost.

Venegas therefore remained with his vanguard at Aranjuez, and his head-quarters at Ocaña, while another division of his army under Lacy was employed in an idle attempt upon Toledo,

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*His useless
attempt up-
on Toledo.*

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which, as he did not choose to destroy the houses from whence the enemy fired at him, because it was a Spanish town, could not possibly succeed, and therefore ought not to have been made. On the third day after the battle Cuesta wrote to Venegas, directing him to advance upon Madrid. "This operation," he said, "must oblige Victor to detach a large part of his force toward the capital, in which case the allies would pursue him to that city, and if any unforeseen accident should compel Venegas to retire, he might retreat by Arganda and along the skirts of the mountains." This letter was written at eleven at night. Twelve hours afterwards Cuesta forwarded a second dispatch, stating that Victor's army had marched in the direction of Torrijos and Toledo. Venegas, upon receiving the first, ordered his whole force to unite at Aranjuez, meaning to lose no time in reaching the capital. The contents of the second staggered him; if the enemy marched for Toledo, they would fall on his rear-guard; if they went through Torrijos direct upon Madrid, they had the start, and would get between him and that city. He determined therefore still to collect his force in the neighbourhood of Aranjuez, and there wait for fresh orders; and he reminded Cuesta how indispensably necessary it was that their movements should be combined.

*Venegas
complains
of Cuesta.*

His army was collected on the night of the 3d, leaving only 600 foot and 200 horse in the neighbourhood of Toledo. The next day he received another dispatch from Cuesta, telling him of his march from Talavera to reinforce Sir Arthur. This letter was written with preposterous confidence; he was going, he said, to secure the victory against Soult, after which they should return to attack Victor. Meantime he advised Venegas to bear in mind, that general actions with better disciplined troops than their own did not suit them. Venegas felt the danger of his own situation, but his prevailing feelings were indignation and

resentment at the multiplied proofs of incapacity which Cuesta had given. He wrote to his government, stating, "that he was thus left to himself with an army inferior in number to the enemy, and, by the acknowledgement of the captain-general, inferior in discipline also: how much more deeply should he have been committed, if, in obedience to that general's orders, he had marched upon Madrid, relying on the promised support of the allied armies!" The reflection was just as well as natural; but Venegas ought to have reflected also, that if he had marched upon Madrid in time, that support would not have failed him. He added, that no choice was left, save of commencing a retreat, which would dispirit the troops, and destroy the national enthusiasm in all the places which they had occupied and must now abandon. Consequences like these, which were immediately before his eyes, made him determine to remain where he was, and fight if he were attacked, preferring to be cut to pieces rather than submit to a shameful flight.

The enemy were well aware of the danger to which they had been exposed from the army of La Mancha. The Intruder, after his defeat at Talavera, retreated to Santa Olalla, leaving Victor to take up a position behind the Alberche, and watch the combined armies. The next day he moved to Bargas and Olias, near Toledo. On the night of the 31st, he received advices from Victor, who being alarmed by Sir Robert Wilson's movements, was about to fall back to Maqueda; at the same time he learnt that Venegas was collecting his force at Aranjuez and threatening Madrid. Alarmed at this, he ordered Sebastiani and the corps of reserve to take up a position at Illescas, from whence they might either advance rapidly to support Victor, or to attack Venegas. Victor's next advices expressed farther fears from the troops at Escalona, whose force he supposed to be far greater than it was: "If the enemy advanced in that direction,"

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August.*The Intruder's movements after the battle.*

CHAP. he said, "as seemed probable, he should retire to Mostoles."
 XXIV. Joseph, trembling for the capital, moved to that place himself
 1809. in the night between the 3d and 4th: Mostoles is only twelve
 August. miles from Madrid, . . so near had the scene of action been
 brought. From thence, having learnt that Victor's apprehen-
 sions had subsided, he turned back on the following night to
 Valdemoro, summoned Sebastiani thither, and ordered an attack
 to be made upon Venegas.

*Venegas
 prepares for
 battle at
 Aranjuez.*

That general expected such an attack from the moment when he was apprised of Cuesta's retreat. At daybreak on the 5th, he went from his head-quarters at Tembleque to reconnoitre the position at Aranjuez. The Queen's Bridge was the only one which had not been broken down; his first measure was to recall Lacy with the advanced guard from Puente Largo on the Xarama, that he might secure his retreat over this bridge in time; then he resolved to occupy the range of heights adjacent to Ontigola, beginning from Mount Parnaso, and to defend the passage of the river. Having directed these measures, he returned to his quarters, leaving Giron in command of the three divisions upon the Tagus. Three hours had hardly elapsed before Giron sent word that large columns of horse and foot and artillery were marching upon Puente Largo, and that some had already crossed the Xarama; this was followed by tidings that a great dust was seen in the direction of the ford of Añover. It could not now be doubted that a serious attack was about to be made; the ford would certainly be attempted, and Venegas was apprehensive that he should be assailed in the rear at the same time by troops from Toledo. He therefore ordered Lacy to cross the Queen's Bridge, and break it down; and marched his reserve from Ocaña to the height on the left of the road between that town and Aranjuez, where they might be ready to resist an attack on the side of Toledo or the ford, and to support the retreat of the

other divisions, who, if they found themselves unable to guard the river, were instructed to retreat to Ocaña; but their orders were to defend the passage to the utmost, and maintain every position inch by inch.

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Lacy could not commence his retreat soon enough to avoid an attack; a strong body of cavalry from the Cuesta de la Reyna fell upon his rear, but they resisted the enemy, and, retiring in good order over the Queen's Bridge, broke it down, and took post upon some heights which protected it: the bridge itself was defended by Don Luis Riquelme with three battalions and four pieces of cannon; another battalion was stationed in the Plaza de S. Antonio. D. Miguel Antonio Panes, a captain of artillery, only son of the Marquis of Villa Panes, defended the broken Puente de Barcas with two eight-pounders and two companies. Other troops were stationed at the ford of the Infante Don Antonio's garden, at the Puente Verde, at the Vado Largo, or broad ford, and in the Calle de la Reyna. A reserve was placed on each side the road to Ocaña, and in the walks immediately adjoining the palace, on the left of which the whole of the cavalry stood ready to charge the enemy in case they should win the passage of the river, or attack the Spaniards in the rear by a party which might have crossed at some remoter point.

The ground whereon a battle has been fought is never passed over by an intelligent traveller without producing a meditative train of thought, however transient, even if the scene has no other interest; but when the local circumstances are remarkable, the impressions become deeper and more durable, especially if the war were one in which, after any lapse of time, the heart still feels a lively concern. Aranjuez had been for nearly two centuries the spring residence of the Spanish court. It stands in a rich and lovely country, where the Xarama falls into the

*Aranjuez
and its gar-
dens.*

CHAP. Tagus, in what was once a peninsula. Charles V. had built a
XXIV. hunting seat there, which Philip III. enlarged into a palace, yet
1809. such a palace as was designed for comfort and comparative
August. retirement, rather than for splendour. In his time a canal was
made between the two rivers, partly with the intent of giving
the place a character of safety, that the King might be secure
there with no larger body of guards than his dignity required.
Succeeding monarchs each added something to the embellish-
ment of the grounds, and Charles IV., when Prince of Asturias,
made a garden which was called by his name. Aranjuez itself
was a poor village till the time of Grimaldi's administration,
when a town was built there under his directions, and partly on
the Dutch plan; the streets being long, spacious, straight, and
uniform, with rows of trees, for beauty and for shade, . . . only
the canals were wanting. The population had increased to some
10,000 persons, who depended in great measure for their pros-
perity upon the annual residence of the court.

The pride of Aranjuez was in its gardens; they were in the
French style, but with a charm which that style derived from a
Spanish climate. Long and wide avenues were overbowered
with elms, which loved the soil, and which, by the stateliness of
their growth, and the deep umbrage of their ample branches,
repaid the care with which water from the Tagus was regularly
conducted to their roots. That river also supplied numerous
fountains, each in the centre of some area, square or circular,
hex- or oct-angular, where, in peaceful times, at all hours of the
day, some idlers or ruminators were seen on the marble benches,
enjoying the shade, and the sight and the sound of the water,
which was thrown up by statues of all kinds, appropriate or
preposterous, beasts, harpies, sea-horses, Tritons, and heathen
gods and goddesses, in jets or curvilinear shoots, intersecting
each other, falling in regular forms, sparkling as they played,

cooling the air around, and diffusing a sense of freshness even in the hottest noon. In some places the loftiest trees were made to bear a part in these devices of wanton power, the pipes being conveyed to their summit; in others the fountains set music in motion when they played. There was one fountain which served as a monument of one of the proudest victories that had ever been achieved by Spain, the central part being formed from a block of marble which had been taken in one of the Turkish ships at Lepanto.

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But this was a place where the strength of vegetation made art appear subordinate, and the magnificence which all these elaborate embellishments produced was subservient to delight and comfort. The elms, which were the largest of their kind, had attained a growth which nothing but artificial irrigation in a genial soil and hot climate could have given them. The poplar and the tamarisk flourished in like manner; the latter grew along the banks of the Tagus with peculiar luxuriance. Every approach to Aranjuez was shaded with trees, from which avenues branched off in all directions, opening into glades, and diversified with bowers. Nor was this royal expenditure directed only to the purposes of splendid enjoyment. The Spanish Kings, with an intention better than the success which attended it, endeavoured to improve the agriculture of the country, by setting their subjects an example upon the royal domains. The best fruits in the Peninsula were cultivated for sale in the royal gardens; the finest oil in Spain was produced there, and wine from vineyards of the choicest grapes was collected in cellars of unequalled extent. They had attempted also to naturalize the camel there, and at one time from two to three hundred of these animals fed in the royal pastures, and were occasionally employed for burthen. But though they bred, and appeared to thrive there, the experiment was given up; the native animals,

CHAP. which are reared with so much less cost and care, being better
XXIV. suited to the soil, and surface, and climate of Spain.

1809.

August.

The banks of the Tagus at Aranjuez, and the gardens which it had so long been the pride and pleasure of the Spanish Kings to embellish, were now to be made the scene of war. About two in the afternoon the French appeared upon the right bank, and began the attack along the whole line. They opened a heavy fire on all points, but more especially upon the ford of Don Antonio's garden, and the reserve from the walks were sent to strengthen that post. Panes at the Puente de Barcas was struck by a ball, which carried away his leg; a glance convinced him that the wound was mortal: "Comrades," said he, "stand by these guns till death.. I am going to heaven:" and, as they bore him from the field, the only anxiety he expressed was, that another officer should take his place without delay. Don Gaspar Hermosa succeeded him, after planting a mortar at the Puente ford in the midst of the enemy's fire. The Spanish artillery was excellently served this day, and frequently silenced that of the French. One mortar, placed in the thicket opposite the islet, made great havoc among the enemy. Lacy, perceiving his own post secure, and that the main attack was made upon the left, at the Puente Verde, the gardens of the Prince and of Don Antonio, removed his division thither without waiting for orders. The firing continued till the approach of night, when the French, baffled in all their attempts, retired. The loss of the Spaniards was between two and three hundred; they computed that of the French at three hundred killed, and about a thousand wounded. The French force consisted of fourteen or fifteen thousand, being the whole of Sebastiani's corps. They themselves carefully avoided all mention of the action, saying only that they worsted the advanced guard of Venegas, and drove it beyond the Tagus. Giron, who com-

manded, was rewarded with the rank of camp-marshal ; and the Junta testified its sense of the heroism of Panes, who died a few hours after he was wounded, by exempting the title in his family from the duties called *lanzas* and *medias anatas* for ever, appointing his father a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and ordering a letter to be written to him, as a document to be preserved in the archives of his house, expressing, in the most honourable terms, the sense which the country entertained of the services rendered to it both by father and son.

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The French after this repulse recrossed the Xarama, and, as Venegas had foreseen, prepared to attack him from the other side. According to their official statement, they thought it would be a long and difficult work to rebuild the bridges at Aranjuez, and that it would be less dangerous to force the passage of the Tagus at Toledo, where the Spaniards remained masters of the bridge. The Spanish General, therefore, disposed his troops at Aranjuez, Ocaña, La Guardia, and Tembleque, ready to march, as circumstances might require, to some point where he could only be attacked in front, and might be freed from the apprehension that the enemy would cut off his retreat by way of Toledo, and, having disabled him, penetrate to the Sierra Morena, the armies of Cuesta and Sir Arthur being too far off to prevent them. The necessity of retreating was indeed obvious ; and the Junta were of opinion that he had no other course left than that of abandoning La Mancha, and taking post at the pass of Despeñaperros. Mr. Frere thought it would be better, if La Mancha were untenable, to occupy the passes with a part of his army only (for it was not to be supposed that at this time the French could make any serious attempt upon Andalusia), and march with or detach the rest upon the left of the enemy, through a country which they had never been able to occupy, Cuenca, Molina, and as far as Aragon ; a movement upon the

Delibera-
tions con-
cerning the
army of La
Mancha.

CHAP. two former points would threaten the capital, upon the latter it
 XXIV. would give the Spaniards a decided superiority in that quarter,
 1809. and interrupt the communication of the French with France.

August.

In the present state of things, Mr. Frere perceived how desirable it was that the Spaniards should have as many small armies as possible; their system of military subsistence and discipline being so imperfect, defeats became dangerous and even destructive in proportion to the size of the army; in small bodies they were comparatively of little importance: in small bodies the Spaniards had almost uniformly been successful; and such diversions would harass and distract the French, and waste their force.

Venegas resolves to attack the enemy.

Mr. Frere spoke upon this plan to one of the leading members of the war department, and would have delivered in his advice in writing, if Marquis Wellesley had not at that time been daily expected to arrive at Seville and supersede him. This circumstance, and the confidence which Venegas expressed in the spirit of his troops (for he seemed disposed to risk a battle rather than abandon La Mancha), induced him to wait for the Marquis's arrival; and then it was too late. For on the same day that Mr. Frere recommended this proposed diversion, Venegas received advices from the fifth division, under General Zerain, by Toledo, that the French had received a reinforcement of 8000 men, and were about to attack him. Upon this the general ordered the fourth division from Tembleque to advance to his support. While they were on their way, Sebastiani, having collected his whole corps at Toledo, attacked Zerain, who retreated in good order to Sonseca, and from thence turned to Almonacid to join the troops which had been sent to his assistance. At Almonacid Venegas assembled his whole army on the 10th, and believing that the number of the enemy did not exceed 14,000, the same reasons which had made him stand his ground at Aranjuez, after the retreat of the combined armies,

Aug. 8.

Aug. 9.

induced him once more to give the French battle. He could not bear to abandon the people of La Mancha, who had welcomed him with enthusiasm on his advance: he knew how injurious it was, not merely to the general character of an army, but to the individual feelings of the soldiery, to be perpetually giving way before the enemy, losing ground, and losing reputation and hope also; and his success at Aranjuez made him confident in the courage and conduct of his troops. Before he delivered his own opinion, he summoned the different chiefs of division to council, and they perfectly accorded with his predetermination. This was on the 10th; he resolved to let the troops rest the next day, that they might recover from their march, and it was agreed to attack the enemy at daybreak on the 12th. Meantime it was supposed more accurate information of their number might be obtained.

Delay has ever been the bane of the Spanish councils, and Venegas should have remembered, that in offensive war every thing depends upon celerity. Victor had now opened a communication with Soult, and the Intruder being thus delivered from all fear of the allied armies, joined Sebastiani, with the reserve, on the 9th. While Venegas was deliberating, his position was reconnoitred; and on the morning of the day which he had allowed for rest he was attacked by an army of little less than double the force at which he had computed it. The Spaniards, however, were not taken by surprise. The right wing, under Vigodet, extended to some rising ground beyond the village of Almonacid: the centre, consisting of two divisions, under Camp-marshal Castejon, were in the plain before the village. Lacy commanded the left, which was supported by a height, detached from the range of hills that run north and south, beginning at Toledo. Giron was stationed, with three battalions, as a reserve, behind the centre; the rest of his di-

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XXIV.
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*He is at-
tacked by
them.*

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1809.

August.

*Battle of
Almonacid.*

vision were posted, part on the heights to the left, part at an advanced battery, and the remainder upon the Castle hill, behind the village. The cavalry, under Camp-marshals the Marquis of Gelo, D. Tomas Zerain, and the Viscount de Zolina, were placed in two bodies, one on each wing.

The Intruder was in the field; but Sebastiani was the real commander. That general perceived that the event of the day depended upon the possession of the hill on the Spaniards' left, and he ordered Laval to attack it with his two divisions. Laval formed in close columns, by divisions and brigades, and attacked the hill both in front and on the right at once. The French suffered considerably in this attack. Count Sobolesky and another chief of battalion were killed, several of equal rank wounded; but they had the advantage of numbers as well as discipline. The Colonel who commanded on the hill was wounded, and before Giron could reach the spot with the reserve, the battalions which were posted there gave way. These battalions, instead of rallying when they found themselves supported, confused the troops who came to support them. The height, upon which the fate of the day depended, was lost; and the enemy, having won it, attacked the Spaniards in flank. Lacy upon this wheeled to face the enemy, and for a while withstood them: 200 cavalry, led by Don Nicholas Chacon, charged one of their columns, which, forming itself into a square, withstood the attack; and Chacon, having his horse shot under him, and some of his best officers and soldiers killed, was compelled to withdraw. In the centre the enemy were equally successful, and at length the Spaniards fell back along the whole of their line. Nevertheless the ground was well contested, and Venegas took up a second position behind Almonacid, supported by the Castle hill. Here he was presently attacked at all points; his cavalry made another charge, which failed for lack of num-

bers, not of spirit, and the general then perceived that there was no hope of recovering the day. He therefore commenced his retreat, and ordered Vigodet, whose division was at this time the least exposed, to bring up and cover the rear. Vigodet performed this service with great coolness, recovered and spiked one of the cannon which had been taken, and began at length to fall back himself in good order. At this time some ammunition carts, which were blown up on his right, that they might not fall into the enemy's hands, frightened the horses of the little cavalry which covered his own retreat, and the French, taking advantage of their confusion, charged him vigorously. The second in command of the division, D. Francisco de Reyna, checked the pursuers, while Vigodet rallied the scattered horse, and collected about 1000 men, under whose protection he left the field. They retreated by different routes to Herencia, meaning to fall back to Manzanares, Membrilla, and Solana. As far as Herencia the movement was effected in good order, only a few soldiers, straggling from their ranks to drink at the few wells in that arid country; but when the van reached Manzanares, a cry arose that the French had got before them on the road of Valdepeñas, to cut off their retreat. This false report, either originating in treason or in cowardice, spread through the troops: from that moment subordination was at an end, and they forfeited the credit which had been gained in the action, by dispersing.

Sebastiani stated the loss of the Spaniards at 4000 killed, 4000 prisoners, an immense number wounded, 100 ammunition waggons, and thirty-five pieces of cannon. The whole of the artillery and baggage was certainly lost; but the number of prisoners was grossly exaggerated, because the Spaniards did not disperse till they had accomplished their retreat; and the French, with that inconsistency which so often betrayed the

CHAP.
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1809.
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CHAP. falsehood of their official accounts, admitted that none of their
XXIV. corps could be overtaken. He gave no account of his own loss ;
1809. Venegas estimated it at 8000, . . an exaggeration as great as
August. that of the French general ; but that the French suffered severely was evident, because they were long crippled for any farther operations. Venegas retired to La Carolina, his men assembled at the passes of the Sierra, and in a few days he was again at the head of a respectable army. The enemy had now effected every thing which they proposed ; they had driven Cuesta and the British beyond the Tagus on one side, and on the other had recovered possession of La Mancha ; and the Intruder, rejoicing in the issue of a campaign, which opened under such inauspicious aspects, returned triumphantly to Madrid. The disgrace of Talavera sate easy upon the French ; . . with their usual contempt of truth, they affirmed that they had won the victory ; and the situation of the contending armies a few weeks after the battle gave credit to the impudent assertion.

CHAPTER XXV.

PLANS OF THE FRENCH. SIR A. WELLESLEY RAISED TO THE
PEERAGE. MARQUIS WELLESLEY ARRIVES IN SPAIN. AL-
TERATIONS IN THE BRITISH MINISTRY. STATE OF THE
SPANISH GOVERNMENT. THE BRITISH ARMY RETREATS TO
THE FRONTIERS OF PORTUGAL. BATTLES OF TAMAMES,
OCANA, AND ALBA DE TORMES.

NEVER during the war had the prospect appeared so hope- 1809.
ful as when Sir Arthur entered Spain. For the first time Buona- August.
parte had been repulsed at all points in a great battle; and for
the first time also a spirit of national resistance had broken
forth in Germany, . . the only spirit by which his tyranny could
be overthrown. The Spaniards seemed to acquire strength from
their defeats, learning confidence in their resources, if not ex-
perience from misfortunes; while the British army, by the
passage of the Douro and the discomfiture of Soult, had once
more made the enemy feel what they might apprehend from
such troops and such a commander.

The Peninsula was but a secondary object in the all-grasping
schemes of Buonaparte's ambition. At first he had expected to
secure it without a struggle; nor was he yet so undeceived con-
cerning the real nature of the resistance to be experienced
there, as to believe that any serious effort would be required for
completing its conquest. In Germany it was, he thought, that

*Soult pro-
poses imme-
diately to
invade Por-
tugal.*

CHAP. the fate of Europe must be decided; and this opinion was pro-
 XXV. claimed in England by those who, on every occasion, sought to
 1809. persuade the public that resistance to such a statesman and such
 August. a general, wherever it was attempted, could only end in defeat,
 and humiliation, and ruin. Under this impression he had ordered the intrusive government, which was in fact entirely under his orders, to content itself with protracting the war till the campaign in Germany should be brought to a close. That campaign was now ended. The battle of Wagram had re-established his shaken power; an armistice had immediately been sued for, and in the negotiations which followed, the house of Austria surrendered more than the French king Francis I. had lost at Pavia. The news of this great success did not, however, induce the Intruder to deviate from his instructions. M. Soult, the most enterprising as well as the ablest of the French officers who were employed in Spain, proposed at this time a plan for re-entering Portugal. The line which should have secured the communication of the British army with Lisbon, he occupied, now that that army had found it necessary to retreat across the Tagus. He proposed, therefore, to move from Plasencia against Beresford's inefficient force, while Ney, advancing from Salamanca, should act upon its left flank. That army, if not absolutely destroyed, would be prevented from forming a junction by way of Alcantara with Sir Arthur; and the French, by rapidly pursuing this advantage, might occupy Abrantes, and once more take possession of Lisbon, in which case Soult, still deceiving himself with regard to the disposition of the Portuguese, thought they would submit to an enemy whom they found it hopeless to resist. The plan was boldly conceived, though M. Soult had not sufficiently taken into his calculation the character of the troops with which he would again be brought in contact: but it was rejected by Joseph, who was at that time guided chiefly by

*Campaign
 of 1809, pp.
 49—52.
 Ib. App.
 C—K.*

M. Jourdan. That General, distinguished for his signal successes in the revolutionary war, held the high situation of Major-General of the army of Spain; and he preferring what seemed the surer though the slower course, resolved implicitly to follow the Emperor Napoleon's instructions, and undertake no offensive operation for the present. A plan, he said, had been laid down for invading Portugal, and would be executed in the month of February. It was their intention to subjugate the south of Spain before this should be undertaken; and if the British Commander had possessed as little foresight as appeared in the conduct of the Spanish government, or if the British army had not derived better support from the Portuguese than from the Spaniards, the French might have succeeded in both parts of their intended operations.

The Central Junta expressed its sense of Sir Arthur Wellesley's services, by nominating him one of the Captain-generals of the army (a rank nearly equivalent to that of our field-marshal), and presenting him, in the name of Ferdinand, with some horses selected from the best breeds of Andalusia. "This tribute," they said, "was of small value in comparison with the services which he had rendered to Spain, and still less in proportion to the wishes of those who offered it: but, for hearts like his, the satisfaction resulting from great achievements was their best recompense; nor was it in the power of man to bestow any reward which could equal the glory of being one of the principal deliverers of a great and generous people, of listening to their blessings, and of deserving their gratitude." Sir Arthur accepted the horses, and the appointment also, provided he should receive permission from his own sovereign; but he declined the pay attached to it, not thinking it becoming that he should burthen the finances of Spain during such a contest. In England, also, he was recompensed with new honours. As soon as the

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Sir A. Wellesley raised to the peerage.

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Aug. 1.

Marquis
Wellesley
arrives in
Spain.

news of his victory arrived, he was raised to the peerage by the titles of Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera, and of Wellington in the county of Somerset.

On the fourth morning after the battle, while the bells of Cadiz were ringing, the cannon firing, and the people rejoicing with higher hopes than had been felt since the surrender of Dupont, Marquis Wellesley landed in that harbour to supersede Mr. Frere. A great concourse assembled to see him land, and as he set foot on shore, a French flag was spread before him, that he might tread upon it in honour of his brother's victory. The people drew his carriage, which in that country is an unusual mark of respect. The Marquis gave one of them a purse of gold to distribute among his comrades; but the man returned it, and, in the name of the people, assured him they desired no reward, being happy that they had this opportunity of expressing the sentiments of the whole nation. Both at Cadiz and at Seville the Marquis was received with every mark of public honour, and with the most enthusiastic expressions of attachment and gratitude to the British nation. But the first dispatches from Sir Arthur opened upon him a disheartening prospect. The combined armies, amounting to not less than 60,000 men, and 16,000 or 18,000 horse, were depending entirely for their daily supply upon the country, which did not contain a population in many square miles equal to the number of the army, and could not of course produce a sufficiency for its sustenance. Extremadura indeed is the worst peopled and least cultivated province of the whole Peninsula. It was necessary to send to a great distance for supplies, which, scanty as they were, could not be procured regularly, nor without great difficulty. The troops were ill fed, and frequently received no rations whatever. Effectual measures, Sir Arthur said, must be taken, and that speedily. No army could serve to any purpose unless

*Distress of
the army
for provi-
sions.*

it were properly fed; and it was absurd to suppose that a Spaniard, or a man or animal of any country, could make exertions without a due supply of food; in fact the Spaniards were more clamorous, and more exhausted, if they did not receive it regularly, than the English. The English, however, were in a state of great distress; from the 3d till the 7th they had had no bread; then about 4000 pounds of biscuit were divided among 30,000 mouths, and the whole supply was exhausted. "The army," said Sir Arthur, "will be entirely lost, if this treatment continues. If efficient measures had been adopted by the government when the distress of the British troops was first represented to them, the benefit must ere this have been experienced. There had been no neglect on the part of Mr. Frere: the evil was owing to the poverty and exhausted state of the country; to the inactivity of the magistrates and people; to their disinclination to taking any trouble, except that of packing up their property, and removing when they heard of the approach of a French patrol; to their habits of insubordination and disobedience, and to the want of power in the government and their officers."

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Aug. 8.

Cuesta's unaccommodating temper aggravated the evil. He was applied to after the battle for ninety mules to draw the British artillery in place of those lost in the action; there were at that time hundreds in his army employed in drawing empty carts, and yet he refused to part with any. Five guns belonging to Alburquerque's division having been taken at Arzobispo, the Duke endeavoured to make over to the British army the mules attached to them; but Cuesta took them for himself. His own cavalry were plentifully supplied with barley, while hundreds of the British horses died for want of it. In other respects, his men suffered as many privations as the English; and vexation at this and at the untoward issue of the campaign, combined

*Disputes
with Cuesta
concerning
supplies.*

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with bodily infirmity, seems to have bewildered him: he lent ear to every complaint against the allies; and at a time when they were literally starving, both men and horses, he wrote to their General, stating that his own troops were in want of necessary food, because all that he ordered for their use was intercepted by the British and their commissaries. The English, he said, actually sold biscuit and meat; and he heard continual complaints and saw continual traces that they plundered all the places through which they passed, and even followed the peasantry to the mountains, for the purpose of stripping them even to the shirt. Sir Arthur positively denied that any thing going to the Spanish army had been stopped by the British; as for the tale of his soldiers selling provisions, he observed, that it was beneath the dignity of his Excellency's situation and character to notice such things, and beneath his own to reply to them. He was concerned that General Cuesta should conceive there was any reason for complaining of the British troops; but, continued he, "when troops are starving, which those under my command have been, as I have repeatedly told your Excellency since I joined you, and particularly when they had no bread from the 3d to the 7th, it is not astonishing that they should go to the villages and even to the mountains to look for food where they think they can get it. The complaints of the inhabitants, however, should not have been confined to the conduct of the British; here in Deleytosa I have seen Spanish soldiers, who ought to have been elsewhere, take off the doors of the houses which were locked up, in order that they might plunder the houses; and they afterwards burnt the doors."

To preserve discipline among starving troops is indeed impossible, and neither Cuesta nor Sir Arthur could be responsible for their men under such circumstances; but the letter of the former brought the question respecting provisions to a point,

and Sir Arthur called upon him to state distinctly whether he understood that the Spanish army was to have not only all the provisions which the country could afford, but all those also which were sent from Seville ; whether any magazines had been formed, and from whence the troops were to draw provisions ? “ I hope,” said he, “ that I shall receive satisfactory answers to these questions to-morrow morning ; if not, I beg that your Excellency will be prepared to occupy the posts opposite Almaraz, as it will be impossible for me to remain any longer in a country in which no arrangement is made for provisioning my troops, and in which it is understood that all the provisions which are either found in the country, or are sent from Seville (as I have been informed, for the use of the British army) are to be applied solely and exclusively to the Spanish troops.” On the day that this correspondence took place, an English commissary arriving from Truxillo with bread and barley for the British army, was stopped on the way, and deprived of all his barley and part of his bread by a detachment of Spanish horse. Whatever momentary irritation might be occasioned by circumstances like these, Sir Arthur commiserated the sufferings of the Spanish army too sincerely to harbour any resentment ; but he perceived the absolute necessity of withdrawing. “ It is useless,” he said to the British ambassador, “ to complain ; but we are not treated as friends, much less as the only prop on which the cause of Spain can depend. But, besides this want of goodwill, which can easily be traced to the temper of the General, there is such a want of resources in the country, and so little exertion in bringing forward what is to be found ; that if the army were to remain here much longer, it would become totally useless. The daily and increasing loss of horses from deficiency of food, and from the badness of what there is, is really alarming.” Ney’s return to Old Castille strengthened him in this resolution ;

CHAP.
XXV.
1809.
August.

CHAP. it satisfied him that no serious attack upon Andalusia was in-
 XXV. tended for the present, and he thought it not unlikely that this
 1809. corps of the enemy was about to invade Portugal, for the sake
 August. of drawing him out of Spain.

*Mr. Frere
 requires the
 removal of
 Cuesta.*

Aug. 9.

The necessity of removing Cuesta from the command appeared so urgent to Mr. Frere, that he deemed it his duty to present a memorial upon the subject, though Marquis Wellesley was expected two days afterward at Seville. He dwelt upon his abandonment of the wounded at Talavera, and upon the imminent danger to which he had exposed Venegas by concealing from him, as well as from his government, the true state of the combined armies, and the inability of the English to proceed. The dismissal of Cuesta, he said, could not long be delayed, and it was important that it should take place instantly, and another commander appointed: either the choice being left to Sir Arthur, or the Junta itself appointing the Duke of Alburquerque, who possessed his confidence and that of the army, and whose abilities had been tried and approved. This was the only satisfaction which could be given to the British General and his army, and even this would be little: "the wound," said Mr. Frere, "is very deep, and the English nation could not have received one more difficult to heal than the abandonment of their wounded at Talavera." This was the last act of Mr. Frere in his public capacity; and it was consistent with the whole conduct of that minister, who, during his mission, never shrunk from any responsibility, nor ever, from the fear of it, omitted any effort which he thought requisite for the common welfare of his own country and of Spain. In presenting such a memorial, while his successor was, as it were, at the door, he was conscious that he might appear to be acting irregularly in his public character; and in his private one, that it might alter the feelings with which he could have wished to take leave of his friends in

Spain ; but, in addition to the urgency of the case, he considered also that it would be peculiarly unpleasant for Marquis Wellesley to begin his mission with an altercation in which his brother was concerned. Mr. Frere's situation had been unfavourable to any thing like a controlling influence ; the intelligence which announced the intended assistance of a British force had been accompanied with an intimation of his recall, and for some months he had, as he expressed himself, literally been a minister only from day to day, looking for the arrival of his successor by the first fair wind. The Junta expressed their sense of his zealous services by conferring upon him the Castillian title of Marquez de la Union (which he received permission from his own government to retain) ; and, in reply to the momentary outcry which misrepresentation and party spirit had raised against him in England, they represented his conduct such as they conceived it to be, and as it truly was. This had never prevented him from using the strongest language and taking the highest tone toward the very persons who had been foremost in this friendly act ; but he felt how unfavourable his situation was, and, knowing that that of Marquis Wellesley would in all respects be very different, he hoped the Marquis might be able to remedy the existing evils as far as they were capable of being remedied. The task, however, was no easy one. " It might seem," he said, " that a British minister ought before that time to have established a regular system for securing the subsistence of the armies ; but the evil lay deep ; it arose from an old despotic government, and from eighteen years of the basest corruption, intrigue, and public pillage. The effects of all this still continued, the system itself was not wholly done away, and even a sovereign in ordinary times would find it difficult to remedy it."

Marquis Wellesley, on his arrival, did not think it expedient to insist on Cuesta's removal. That General, he observed, was

Cuesta resigns the command.

CHAP. XXV. said to be deficient in every quality necessary for an extensive command, except courage; his temper rendered him peculiarly unfit for acting with an allied army, and it was scarcely possible that another officer with equal disqualifications should be found in the Spanish service. But the government was under some apprehension of his influence, which was supposed to be extensive and dangerous, though it rested on no other foundation than the precarious one of undeserved popularity. The Marquis, therefore, limited his interference to a strong expression of his sense of the General's misconduct, being of opinion that his removal might be effected more willingly and with less danger if it appeared to be the consequence of his own actions, rather than the result of a direct application from the British ambassador. The Junta, however, were desirous that such a direct application should be made; and Marquis Wellesley then addressed a note to Garay, stating that it was impossible to hope for any degree of co-operation, or even for any aid from the troops of Spain to the British army, if the chief command remained in the hands of General Cuesta. Cuesta had wisely anticipated such a measure. Two days after the date of that letter to Sir Arthur, in which he complained so preposterously of the British troops, a paralytic stroke deprived him of the use of one leg; feeling himself then completely incapacitated, he delivered over the army to the second in command, D. Francisco de Eguia, and requested permission to resign, that he might go to the baths of Alhama. When, therefore, the Marquis delivered in his note, he was informed that Cuesta's resignation had been accepted.

Eguia succeeds ad interim to the command.

Eguia was well acquainted with the military topography of Spain, but had no other qualification for the command of an army: at the battle of Medellin he did not venture to depart from his orders without receiving fresh ones from Cuesta, at a

time when it was impossible for Cuesta to communicate with him, and by this imbecility he completed the destruction of the army that day. Mr. Frere, knowing that the military Junta would be most likely to confirm him in the command, because he was one of the old school, wrote a private note to Garay, deprecating such an appointment. Alburquerque was the proper person for the command; but the Junta were jealous of his rank, his popularity, his talents, and his enlightened views; and Marquis Wellesley soon discovered that, if he were named to the command, the army under him would certainly be reduced. Till, however, a successor to Cuesta should be chosen, the command devolved upon Eguia; and when that General notified this to the British Commander, he accompanied the intelligence with the fairest professions, desiring him to depute a confidential officer, who, with another appointed on the part of the Spaniards, might regulate the distribution of provisions in such a manner that the English army should be supplied in preference to the Spaniards. Lord Wellington expressed, in reply, his perfect confidence in the intentions of Eguia, and sent some officers to Truxillo, there to meet any whom Eguia might appoint, and settle some practicable arrangement: a preference like that which was spoken of he well perceived was impossible.

When first the Junta were informed of the distress of the British army, nothing appeared to hurt them so much as that their own troops should have been supplied while their allies were in want, and they ordered Cuesta, in every instance, to supply the British troops in preference to his own. They directed the Junta of Badajoz to send two members of their body into the vale of Plasencia, and secure the persons of those magistrates who, having engaged to furnish means for the British army, had failed in their engagement; to supersede them also, and place at the disposal of the British commissary every thing

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*Calvo sent
to see to the
supplies.*

CHAP. XXV. 1809. August. which he might require. Before these measures could be executed, Soult entered from Old Castille, and the whole of the fertile country on that side of the Tagus fell into the possession of the enemy. When the complaints of the British General became louder, the Junta, alarmed at his intended retreat into Portugal, deputed D. Lorenzo Calvo, one of their own body, to the armies, hoping that his exertions, aided by his authority, would effectually remedy the evil. Calvo was considered a man of energetic character and activity, and, having been bred up in commerce, had acquired those habits of business which were necessary for the service in which he was now employed. True to that system of dissimulation, which, by the old school, was esteemed essential in all business of state, he was charged to invest Cuesta with the order of Charles III. lest that General should take umbrage at the distinction conferred upon Lord Wellington, though at this very time the Junta were so offended at Cuesta's conduct, that nothing but their fears had prevented them from immediately displacing him.

Lord Wellington declares his intention of falling back.

But neither Eguia's professions, nor the measures of the government, nor the presence of one of its members, produced any relief to the British army. Had it been in a condition for service, and provided with means of transport, Lord Wellington had it in view to act against the French at Plasencia, for which purpose he ordered materials to be collected for repairing the Puente de Cardinal; but his cavalry had now consumed all the forage within reach; they were obliged to go from twenty to thirty miles to procure it, and frequently when they had gone so far, the Spaniards, being themselves in equal want, deprived them of it on their return. The horses were at length so much reduced that they were scarcely able to relieve the outposts. More than a month had now elapsed since the British General informed Cuesta that, if he were not supplied, he could not

remain in Spain. In the course of that time, if proper measures had been taken, supplies might have been forwarded from the farthest part of Andalusia; but not a mule or cart, or article of provision of any kind had been obtained under any order from, or arrangement made by, the government. Lord Wellington applied for a remount of only an hundred mares, which could not be used in the Spanish cavalry, because they used stallions; even these he could not procure, nor did he receive an answer to his application. It was now become absolutely necessary to withdraw, and on the 18th of August, he requested Marquis Wellesley to give notice to the government that he was about so to do. "Since the 22d of last month," said he, "the horses have not received their regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry not ten days bread. I have no doubt the government have given orders that we should be provided as we ought to be, but orders are not sufficient. To carry on the contest to any purpose, the labour and service of every man and of every beast in the country should be employed in the support of the armies; and these should be so classed and arranged as not only to secure obedience to the orders of the government, but regularity and efficiency in the performance of the service. Magazines might then with ease be formed, and transported wherever the armies should be stationed. But as we are now situated, 50,000 men are collected upon a spot which cannot afford subsistence for 10,000, and there are no means of sending to a distance to make good the deficiency: the Junta have issued orders, which, for want of arrangement, there are no persons to obey; and the army would perish here, if I were to remain, before the supplies could arrive."

Prepared as both the Spanish government and general ought to have been for such a determination, both manifested the greatest astonishment when it was announced. Eguia wrote to

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*Correspondence with
Eguia and
Calvo.*

CHAP. Lord Wellington, repeating his protestations, that he should have
XXV. every thing which he required, and that the Spaniards should go
1809. without any thing, rather than the British should be in want.
August. “An English commissary,” he said, “should reside at Truxillo,
who should have a key of the magazines, and take the proportion
for the British army, though his own should perish. If,” he con-
tinued, “notwithstanding these conclusive protestations, the Bri-
tish General persisted in marching into Portugal, it would be ap-
parent that other causes induced him to take that step, and not the
want of subsistence.” Upon this insulting assertion, Lord Wel-
lington informed Eguia that any farther correspondence between
them was unnecessary. He entered, nevertheless, into a sufficient
explanation of the real state of affairs. The magazines of Trux-
illo, according to a return sent by Eguia himself, did not contain
a sufficiency to feed the British army alone for one day. No
doubt was entertained of the exertions of the Spanish General,
nor of his sincerity. “The deficiencies,” said Lord Wellington,
“arise not from want of orders of your Excellency, but from the
want of means in the country, from the want of arrangement in the
government, and from the neglect of timely measures to supply
the wants which were complained of long ago.” A letter from
Calvo to Lord Wellington implied the same suspicion concerning
the motives of his retreat as Eguia had done, though in more
qualified terms. This member of the Junta came forward with
something more specious than vague promises and protestations.
“He bound himself,” he said, “to provide the army, within three
days, with all the rations which it might require; and within fif-
teen days to have magazines formed in places appointed by the
British General, containing all the articles which the army could
consume in one or two months; and to provide also carts and
mules, both of draft and burthen, sufficient for the transport of
these magazines.” He then protested that 7000 rations of bread,

50,000 pounds of flour, 250 *fanegas* of barley, 50 of rye, 100 of wheat, and 60 *arrobas* of rice were ready, with means of transport for them, and before the morrow noon would reach the British army in their present position. “My activity,” said Calvo, “shall not rest until continual remittances of the same articles prove that my promises deserve to be confided in; and if there were in your Excellency’s intention any disposition to alter your purpose of retreat, I am certain I should obtain the satisfaction of hearing your Excellency yourself confess that I had surpassed your hopes.” At the time when Lord Wellington received this letter, he had in his possession an order dated only five days back, and signed by this very member of the Supreme Junta, ordering to the Spanish head-quarters, for the use of the Spanish army, all the provisions which the British commissary had provided in the town of Guadalupe and its neighbourhood. Well, therefore, might he reply to him, that he could have no confidence in his assurances. “As for the promise,” said he, “of giving provisions to the British army to the exclusion of the Spanish troops, such a proposal can only have been made as an extreme and desperate measure to induce me to remain in Spain; and were it practicable, I could not give my consent to it. The Spanish army must be fed as well as the British. I am fully aware,” he continued, “of the consequences which may follow my departure, though there is now no enemy in our front; but I am not responsible for them, whatever they may be. They are responsible who, having been made acquainted with the wants of this army more than a month ago, have taken no effectual means to relieve them; who allowed a brave army, which was rendering gratuitous services to Spain, and which was able and willing to pay for every thing it received, to starve in the midst of their country, and be reduced by want to a state of inefficiency; who refused or neglected to find carriages for

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CHAP. removing the officers and soldiers who had been wounded in their
 XXV. service, and obliged me to give up the equipment of the army
 1809. for the performance of this necessary act of humanity." On the
 August. following day Lord Wellington began his retreat in the direction
 Aug. 20. of Badajos.

*Marquis
 Wellesley
 proposes a
 plan for
 supplying
 the armies.*

He halted at Merida, and eight days after his departure, being then four marches from Xaraicejo, he found none of the supplies on the road which had so confidently been promised. Having, however, been able to separate his troops, and being out of reach of Eguia's army, he now procured regular supplies. Marquis Wellesley meantime had been indefatigable in pressing upon the government the necessity of a regular plan for provisioning the armies; and he found, upon investigation, that orders enough had been issued, but no means had been employed either to enforce the execution of those orders, or to ascertain in what respects they had failed, or what were the causes either of their total failure or of their partial success. No magazines or regular depots had been established, no regular means of transport provided, nor any persons regularly appointed to conduct and superintend convoys, under the direction of the general commanding the army; nor had any system been adopted for drawing from the more fertile provinces, by a connected chain of magazines, resources to supply the deficiency of those poorer countries in which the army might be acting. At the solicitation of the Junta, Marquis Wellesley delivered in a plan for remedying these evils. It was less easy of execution in Spain than it would have been in England, where the system of our stage-coaches and waggons has disciplined a great number of persons in the detail of such arrangements; yet, with due exertions on the part of government, it might speedily have been established. Two days elapsed, and no notice was taken of the proposal; he requested a reply, and after two days more

Garay put into his hand a long string of regulations for the internal management of the magazines when they should have been formed. Marquis Wellesley again anxiously inquired whether the Junta were disposed to adopt the plan which he had formed at their request, and whether any steps had been taken for carrying it into effect? At length, after it had been nine days in their hands, he was informed that they assented to it, . . . but this was all; it was a mere verbal assent, and no measures whatever were taken for beginning arrangements of such urgent necessity. The government at the same time expressed its confidence that the British army would now rejoin the Spaniards, and make a forward movement against the enemy. Marquis Wellesley suspected some of the Junta of treason. "This proposition," said he to his government, "accords with the general tenor of those professions of zeal for active war, which have particularly characterized the declarations of the Junta since the army has been deprived of the means of movement and supply. Far from affording any just foundation of confidence in their intentions, such declarations of activity and enterprise, unaccompanied by any provident or regular attention to the means and objects of the war, serve only to create additional suspicions of ignorance, weakness, or insincerity. No person acquainted with the real condition of the British and Spanish forces at this time, could reasonably advise a forward movement against the enemy, with any other view than the certain destruction of the allied armies."

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The conduct of the Junta gave strong grounds for such a suspicion. The real cause which had checked the progress of a victorious army, and finally reduced it to a state unfit for service, could not be concealed; public opinion loudly imputed this evil to the negligence of government, and the government endeavoured, by ungenerous artifices, to divert the general in-

His ill opinion of the Spanish government.

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dignation. Rumours were set afloat that the real cause of the retreat of the British army was very different from the assigned one; they had not fallen back upon Portugal because there had been any deficiency either in their means of supply or of transport, but because of certain political considerations, inconsistent with the security and honour of Spain, and with the good faith of Great Britain. Demands, it was whispered, had been made in the King of England's name, for the cession of Cadiz, of the Havannah, and even of the whole island of Cuba; changes had been required in the form of the Spanish government, as preliminary conditions to the farther operations of the British troops in Spain, and Lord Wellington had retreated only because these demands were refused. These reports, which, if not invented by the government, certainly were not discountenanced by them, were absolutely and entirely false; nothing had been asked from Spain except subsistence for the army employed in her defence. Marquis Wellesley, however, though he perceived the criminal misconduct of the government, and though he affirmed that in the last campaign no rational motives could be imagined for the conduct of some of the generals and officers, unless it were supposed that they concerted their operations with the French instead of the British general, did justice to the people of Spain. "Whatever insincerity or jealousy towards England existed, was to be found," he said, "in the government, its officers, and adherents; no such unworthy sentiment prevailed among the people." They had done their duty, and were still ready to do it; and, notwithstanding the vexations which he experienced, and the alarm and even ill-will which the retreat of the British excited, he remembered, as became him, that the cause of Spain and England was the same: while, therefore, he expressed his opinion that the Cortes ought to be assembled, and a more efficient government formed than that of so ill-constituted and

anomalous a body as the Junta, he listened willingly to every suggestion for employing the British troops in any practicable manner. Might it not be possible, it was said, for them to take up a position on the left bank of the Guadiana, occupying Merida as an advanced post, their right at Almendralejo, and their left extending toward Badajoz? Portugal might be covered by this position; Seville protected at the same time, and a point of support given to the left of the Spanish army, which should in that case be cantoned in Medellin, Don Benito, and Villa Nueva de la Serena.

This plan the Marquis proposed to his brother; but that able general was of opinion that the Guadiana was not defensible by a weaker against a stronger army, being fordable in very many places, and affording no position. The Spanish army, he thought, was at that time in the best position in that part of the country, one which they ought to hold against any force that could be brought against them, if they could hold any thing; while they held it they covered the Guadiana effectually, and their retreat from it was always secure. He, therefore, recommended that they should send away the bridge of boats which was still opposite Almaraz, and remain where they were as long as possible. For the British army, Lord Wellington said, he saw no chance at present of its resuming offensive operations; and he desired that no hopes might be held out to the Junta of any farther co-operation on his part with the Spanish troops, which in their present state were by no means to be depended on. He saw the difficulty to which this determination might reduce the Spanish government; their army might be seized with a panic, run off, and leave every thing exposed to instant loss. All he could say to this was, that he was in no hurry to withdraw from Spain; he wanted to refresh his troops; he should not enter Portugal till he had heard Marquis Wellesley's sentiments; if he did enter it he should go

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Lord Wellington objects to taking a position on the Guadiana.

CHAP. no farther than the frontier, where he should be so near, that the
 XXV. enemy, unless in very great force, would not venture across the
 1809. Guadiana, leaving the British army upon their flank and rear;
 August. in fact, therefore, he should be as useful to Spain within the Por-
 tuguese frontier as upon the Guadiana, and even more so, because
 the nearer he went to Portugal, the more efficient he should be-
 come. The best way to cover the Guadiana and Seville, was by a
 position on the enemy's flank.

Alburquerque appointed to the command in Extremadura.

As an inducement to Lord Wellington to remain, and co-operate with the Spanish army, the Junta proposed to place the corps which they designed to leave in Extremadura under his command. This was to consist of 12,000 men, a number inadequate to the service for which they were required; but the true reason was perceived by the British General; he had by this time had ample opportunities of discovering that the Junta, in the distribution of their force, did not consider military defence and military operations so much as political intrigues and the attainment of trifling political objects. The Junta of Extremadura had insisted that Alburquerque should have the command in their province; the government was weak enough in authority to be obliged to yield this, and weak enough in judgement to diminish as far as possible the army which they unwillingly entrusted to this envied and most ill-treated nobleman. Lord Wellington, who could not have accepted the command unconditionally without permission from his own court, declined it altogether under present circumstances, as being inconsistent with those operations which he foresaw would soon become necessary for the British army. He had intelligence that a council of war held at Salamanca had recommended an attack upon Ciudad Rodrigo: the loss of that place would cut off the only communication which the Spanish government had with the northern provinces, and would give the French secure

possession of Old Castille, and probably draw after it the loss of Almeida. It would, therefore, be incumbent upon him to make exertions for relieving Ciudad Rodrigo. The cabildo of that city, just at this time when Lord Wellington was contemplating their approaching danger, and how best to succour them, gave an example of the spirit which too many of these provincial authorities displayed toward the British army. 100,000 pounds of biscuit had been ordered there, and paid for by a British commissary ; and when Marshal Beresford sent for it, that it might be deposited in the magazines at Almeida, the cabildo seized 30,000 pounds of this quantity, upon the ground that debts due to that city by Sir John Moore's army had not been paid, . . although part of the business of the commissary who was sent to Ciudad Rodrigo was to settle these accounts, and discharge the debts in question.

This was a specimen of that ill-will towards England which prevailed in many places among persons of this rank ; and Marquis Wellesley perceived that such persons, if not favoured by the government, were certainly not discountenanced. The same spirit was manifested but too plainly by the persons employed about Cuesta's army. While they were professing that the English army should be served in preference to their own people (even to the exclusion of them, if needful), they never offered to supply a single cart or mule, or any means of transport from their own abundance. Lord Wellington, for want of such means, was compelled to leave his ammunition behind him, and then no difficulty was found in transporting it to the Spanish stores. No difficulty was found in transporting the bridge of boats from Almaraz to Badajoz ; yet if these means of transport, with which the Spanish army was always abundantly provided, had been shared with the British army, many of the difficulties under which it suffered would have been relieved, and its separation, says Lord Wellington, certainly would not

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*Lord Wel-
lington
withdraws
to Badajoz.*

CHAP. have taken place when it did. The distress which his men
 XXV. suffered would not have been felt in an equal degree by the
 1809. French, or by any people who understood how to manage their
August. food. Meat they had always in sufficiency, and their chief want
 was of bread, . . they were not ingenious enough to make a com-
 fortable meal without it, though flour or rice was served out in
 its stead. But the want of food for the cavalry, and of means
 of transport, which actually rendered the British army inefficient,
 could not be remedied by any dexterity of the men, or any fore-
 sight of the general, and is wholly imputable to the conduct of
 the Spanish generals and the Spanish government. Spain was
 grievously injured by this unpardonable misconduct. The En-
 glish ministry were at this very time proposing to increase Lord
 Wellington's force to 30,000 men, provided the supreme com-
 mand were vested in the British general, and effectual arrange-
 ments made for their supply. But in the present state of things,
 both the Marquis and his brother perceived that any co-operation
 with the Spanish armies would only draw on a repetition of the
 same disasters. The intent was therefore abandoned, and Lord
 Wellington at the beginning of September proceeded to Badajoz,
 stationing his army, part within the Portuguese frontier, and
 part on the Spanish territory, in a position which would menace
 the flank and rear of the French if they advanced toward An-
 dalusia.

*Expedition
 to Walche-
 ren.*

While the allied armies were thus rendered inefficient, not
 by the skill or strength of the enemy, but by the inexperience
 and incapacity of the Spanish authorities, the mightiest force
 that had ever left the British shores was wasted in a miserable
 expedition to the Scheldt, and upon objects so insulated, and
 unimportant at that crisis, that if they had been completely
 attained, success would have been nugatory. Had that force
 been landed in the north of Germany, as the Austrian govern-

ment proposed, it has since been known, that what Schill did with his single regiment, would have been done by Blucher and the whole Prussian army. Marquis Wellesley had always disapproved of its destination, looking upon the plan as at once absurd and ruinous. Destructive to the last degree it proved, from the unwholesome nature of the country to which it was sent: a cause which of all others might with most certainty have been foreseen, and yet by some fatality seems to have been overlooked by all who were concerned in planning the expedition or consulted upon it. The only consolation, if consolation it may be deemed, for the misemployment of such a force, was in the knowledge that, owing to the state of the Spanish counsels, and the temper of the Spanish generals, it could not have acted in Spain.

The British government meantime had to struggle with difficulties at home as well as abroad, and of the most unexpected kind. During the former part of the year parliament was occupied with an inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York as commander-in-chief, which ended in his resigning the office. The circumstances which were disclosed rendered this resignation becoming and necessary; but perhaps there never was another instance in which the reaction of public opinion was at once so strongly and so justly manifested. For when the agitation was subsided which had been raised, not so much by the importance of the business itself, as by the unremitting efforts of a set of libellers the vilest and most venomous of their kind, it was then perceived that the accusation had originated in intrigue and malice; that the abuses which were brought to light were far less than had been supposed to exist, and that in proving them it had been proved also that the greatest improvements had been introduced into that department by his Royal Highness, and that the general administration was excellent. From that time, there-

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Inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York.

CHAP. fore, the Duke acquired a popularity which he had never before
 XXV. possessed ; and the efforts which had been made with persevering
 1809. malignity to ruin him in the good opinion of the nation, served
September. only to establish him there upon the strongest and surest
 grounds.

*Alterations
 in the mi-
 nistry.*

Sept. 23.

This inquiry had occupied a full third of the whole session, to the grievous interruption of public business, and the more grievous excitement of the people, even to the extinction in most minds of all other public interest whatever. The ministry meantime had other causes of disquiet, which did not transpire till the session had closed. Mismanaged arrangements for the removal of Lord Castlereagh from the war-department, induced him to challenge Mr. Canning, with whom the wish for his removal originated, but who in the course of the affair had been as ill used as himself. Both parties in consequence resigned : the Duke of Portland did the same, compelled by the state of his health, for he died almost immediately afterwards, and thus the administration was broken up. Lord Liverpool, the only remaining secretary of state, performed the business of the other two departments, while the remaining members of the cabinet looked about in dismay, and almost in despair, for new colleagues and for a new head. Their situation appeared so forlorn, that official letters were addressed to Earl Grey and Lord Grenville, informing them that his Majesty had authorised Earl Liverpool and Mr. Perceval to communicate with their lordships for the purpose of forming an extended and combined administration, and requesting them to come to town, that as little time as possible might be lost in forwarding so important an object. Earl Grey replied, that had his Majesty been pleased to signify he had any commands for him personally, he should not have lost a moment in showing his duty by prompt obedience to his royal pleasure ; but when it was proposed that he should com-

municate with the existing ministers, for the purpose of forming a combined administration with them, he should be wanting in duty to the King, and in fairness to them, if he did not at once declare that such a union was, as far as it regarded him under the then circumstances, impossible: this being the answer which he was under the necessity of giving, his appearance in London could be of no advantage; and it might possibly be of detriment to the country, if, in consequence of a less decisive answer, any farther delay should take place in the formation of a settled government.

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Lord Grenville, who was in Cornwall, replied, he should lose no time in repairing to town, and begged leave to defer all observations upon the business till his arrival. The day after his arrival he sent an answer conformable to that of Earl Grey, declining the proposed communication, because it could not be productive of any public advantage. "I trust," he added, "I need not say that this opinion is neither founded in any sentiment of personal hostility, nor in a desire of unnecessarily prolonging political differences. To compose, not to inflame, the divisions of the empire, has always been my anxious wish, and is now more than ever the duty of every loyal subject; but my accession to the existing administration could not in any respect contribute to this object, nor could it be considered in any other light than as a dereliction of public principle. This answer, which I must have given to any such proposal, if made while the government was yet entire, cannot be varied by the retreat of some of its members. My objections are not personal, they apply to the principle of the government itself, and to the circumstances which attended its appointment."

Nothing but extreme necessity could have induced the remaining ministers to make these overtures; and when their advances were thus rejected, great hopes were entertained by

CHAP. the adverse party, that they would not be able to keep their
 XXV. ground as an administration. It was even affirmed and be-
 1809. lieved that some of the highest offices were offered to different
September. persons, and that none could be found to accept them. The
 only hope of the ministry rested upon Marquis Wellesley; hints
 were thrown out that he would not join any arrangement in
 which Mr. Canning was not included; this opinion, however,
 proved erroneous, the Marquis accepted the office which Mr.
 Canning vacated, the Earl of Liverpool was transferred from
 the home to the war department, and the situation which he had
 vacated was filled by Mr. Ryder. Lord Palmerstone was made
 secretary at war in the room of Sir James Pulteney, and Mr.
 Perceval took the place of the Duke of Portland, . . . thus uniting
 in himself, as Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington had done before him,
 the offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the ex-
 chequer. The loss of the Duke was only that of a name; that
 of Mr. Canning was greatly regretted, as was also the secession
 of Mr. Huskisson, who resigned his seat at the treasury at the
 same time; but though the ministry was weakened by their de-
 parture, it was well understood that the opposition would derive
 no aid from them; and, on the whole, government was thought
 to have gained by these changes more than it had lost, in con-
 sequence of the high reputation of Marquis Wellesley, and the
 almost general desire of the nation to see him in administration.
 His brother, Mr. Henry Wellesley, was appointed to succeed
 him as ambassador to Spain.

*Disposition
 of the
 French and
 Spanish
 armies.*

The disposable force of the enemy in Spain at this time was
 estimated at 125,000 men, well provided with cavalry and ar-
 tillery, exclusive of the garrisons in Barcelona and the strong
 places upon the Pyrenean frontier. Of these, about 35,000
 were employed in Arragon and Catalonia, the rest were in
 the two Castilles and Extremadura, 70,000 being in the field

under Victor, Soult, Ney, Sebastiani, and Mortier, . . the remainder employed in garrisons, and in keeping up the communication between the different places in their possession. Sick and wounded were not included, and an allowance was made for the loss of 10,000 men at Talavera. At the lowest estimate, this was the number of the enemy; the force of the Spaniards was miserably inferior. Blake, after the rout at Belchite, had reassembled a small army, scarcely exceeding 6000 men, with which he was endeavouring, from time to time, to relieve Gerona. Noroña had 15,000 in Galicia; but a tenth part of these were without arms, and he had neither cavalry nor artillery. The Duke del Parque had 9000 men at Ciudad Rodrigo, and Eguia and Venegas had about 50,000 in their two armies. But the inefficient state of these troops had been lamentably proved; both cavalry and infantry were for the most part indisciplined, and the latter neither properly clothed nor accoutred, notwithstanding large supplies of all things needful had been sent from England.

The Intruder meantime, now that immediate danger was averted, had leisure to feel the wretched state to which his subserviency to a wicked brother had reduced him. He was, indeed, in possession of Madrid, and half the kingdom was overrun by his troops; but how were those troops to be paid, or how was he to support the expenses of his court and government? Whatever might be the issue of the war in the Peninsula, the vast colonial empire of Spain could never be his, and the resources which still continued to arrive from thence were enjoyed by the legitimate government. Wherever his authority extended, trade was at an end, the people were impoverished, and the sources of revenue destroyed. The first-fruits of plunder also had now been consumed. Andalusia, indeed, offered a harvest as yet untouched, and which would ere long be at his disposal;

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September.*Neediness
of the in-
trusive go-
vernment.*

CHAP. but till the opportunity arrived, it was necessary to glean what-
 XXV. ever had been spared in the former pillage. An edict was issued,
 1809. denouncing severe punishment against those who should secrete
September. papers or effects belonging to the suppressed monasteries, and
 offering a reward for the discovery of such property, propor-
 tionate to its value. He had previously confiscated the property
 of all Spaniards in foreign countries, who should not forthwith
 return in obedience to his command ; he now called upon those
 in whose hands property, papers, or effects had been left by
 others when forsaking their place of residence, to deliver them
 up for the use of the treasury. Any persons buying or selling
 gold, silver, or jewels, which had belonged to a suppressed con-
 vent, or to an insurgent, were to be severely punished ; and those
 who assisted the insurgents in any manner were to be put to death.
 Another decree sequestered the revenues of all archbishops and
 bishops, and appointed pensions from the state instead. Another
 commanded all persons possessing plate to the amount of more
 than ten dollars, except in plates, knives, and spoons, to give in
 an account thereof within three days ; the mint was immediately
 to pay a fourth of its value, and the remainder was promised
 within four months. All plate which should be concealed after
 this edict was to be forfeited, and a fourth of its value given to
 the informer ; and silversmiths were forbidden to purchase any
 articles in silver, except such as were permitted to be in use by
 the present decree.

*Measures of
 severity.*

These measures proved the neediness of the intrusive govern-
 ment. Its atrocious character had already been amply demon-
 strated ; if farther proof were needed, it was to be found in a
 decree by which all persons whose sons were serving in what it
 called the insurgent armies were required to furnish a man to
 the Intruder's service for every son, or a proportionate sum of
 money ; the elder brothers, or other nearest relations or guardians

of those who had no father, were subjected to the same law ; and those who had no money either for procuring the substitute or paying the fine were to be imprisoned, or sent into France. But it was reserved for this government to introduce a new species of barbarity, which had never before been heard of in war. Kellermann, whom the English had rescued with such difficulty from the vengeance of the Portuguese at Lisbon, was at this time governor-general of what the French called Upper Spain, that is, of the provinces of Salamanca, Zamora, Toro, Leon, Valladolid, Palencia, Burgos, Soria, Santander, Biscay, Guipuzcoa, and Alava. Throughout this whole tract of country he placed all horses and mares above a certain height in requisition for the French armies, ordering them to be taken to the respective country towns, and there delivered for that purpose ; and every horse or mare below the size named, or under thirty months old, with every mare that should be three months gone with foal, was to have the left eye put out by the owner, and to be in other ways rendered unfit for military service. A fine of four times the value of the beast was to be exacted from any one who disobeyed this edict, and all French officers were charged to see it carried into execution. Nothing can more strikingly evince their moral degradation, than that their general should have ordered them to enforce the execution of an edict like this. These were the measures pursued in the name of a King who was represented as being equally philosophic and humane, who was to remedy all the evils of long misrule, to relieve the people from all grievances, restore Spain to its ancient prosperity, and confer upon it a happiness which it had never before enjoyed ! In an unhappy hour had Joseph's ministers entered his service, persuading, or seeking to persuade, themselves that they might benefit their country by giving their countenance to a perfidious and odious usurpation. The ablest men who have ever endeavoured to do good by evil

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*Kellermann's
edict.**Measures of
Joseph's
ministers.*

CHAP. means, have felt their best intentions frustrated in the attempt.
XXV. These ministers, worthy, as under other circumstances they
1809. might have been of their station, found themselves now the mere
September. instrument of that very military power which they had flattered
themselves that they should be allowed to direct. Still, however,
seeking some excuse to their own hearts, and to posterity, they
took advantage of the time for attempting alterations, which
would have been most salutary if the nation had been prepared
for them, . . . but for which it was so little prepared, that the pre-
mature attempt only attached the Spaniards the more to the very
evils from which it was intended to deliver them. One sweeping
decree abolished all the regular orders in Spain, whether mo-
nastic, mendicant, or clerical ; the individuals belonging to them
were ordered to quit their convents within fifteen days, resume
their secular habits, and repair to their native places, where
pensions were promised them. It was certain that the intrusive
government had neither the means nor the intention of paying
these pensions ; but the whole property of the suppressed orders
was seized for the use of the state. The reason assigned for this
measure in the preamble to the decree was, that these com-
munities had taken a hostile part against the government, which,
while it thus abolished them, wished to recompense those indi-
viduals who had conducted themselves well. Better reasons,
Urquijo and his colleagues well knew, would only have exaspe-
rated a people whose souls were thoroughly enslaved to the
superstitions which debased them ; but the cause which was thus
assigned exasperated them as much, and this feeling was kept
up and disseminated every where by the ejected members, who,
wherever they went, excited the compassion of their countrymen
and inflamed their hatred of the intrusive government. Some
prudence as well as humanity was shown, by exempting the
nuns from this decree ; they were subjected to the ordinary, and

forbidden to receive pupils. The military orders were abolished also, except that of the Golden Fleece, and the one which the intrusive government had itself instituted. This was needlessly offending the national pride, which was in like manner wounded by the removal of the tax raised under the name of the *Voto de Santiago*; the relief, even had circumstances allowed it to be felt, would not have compensated for the outrage upon Spanish feeling. In taking away the privilege of sanctuary, and suppressing all ecclesiastical jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases, the ministers acted as they would have wished to do, had they held their offices by a better tenure; and in making strangulation the mode of death for all criminals of whatever rank, and decreeing that degradation was implied in the sentence. But when an edict affected to abolish all dignities and titles which had not been conferred by the Intruder, and required the traitorous nobles in his service to receive from him a confirmation of the peerage which they had disgraced, the futility of the decree only provoked contempt.

Joseph's ministers had leisure for legislative speculations and for dreams of reformation. The real business of government was not in their hands; in all essential points they were mere ciphers, and seemed to feel that they were so. The Central Junta was in a situation as much more trying as it was more honourable. The difficulties and embarrassments of every kind with which they were beset might have confused heads more experienced in affairs of state; and their exertions under the pressure of immediate danger left them little time for those measures of effectual reform, which Spain so greatly needed, but which were looked for more eagerly by the British nation than by the Spaniards, for as a people the Spaniards were contented with their old system, and attached to it even with all its evils and abominations. The general wish in England was that the

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The Central Junta announce that the Cortes will be assembled.

CHAP. Cortes should be convened, and this was desired as sincerely by
XXV. the British government as by Jovellanos and those other noble-
1809. minded Spaniards who hoped through regular and constitutional
means to restore the liberty and the prosperity of their country.
It was long after the installation of the Junta before the disasters
of the day allowed them leisure for thinking of the morrow. To
this their delay in taking measures for assembling the Cortes
must be ascribed, more than to their love of power, which they
were ill able to wield, or of the patronage which they unworthily
bestowed. But to these motives the delay was imputed; and by
not following the advice of Jovellanos when the act would have
appeared spontaneous and graceful, they lost the opportunity of
obtaining that popularity which even the semblance of disinter-
estedness is sure to acquire. It was not till eight months after
their installation that a decree came forth for re-establishing the
legal representation of the monarchy in its ancient Cortes. The
time was left indefinite, but the edict said it would be convoked
in the course of the ensuing year, or earlier, if circumstances
should permit.

The language of the Supreme Junta on this, as on every
other occasion, was worthy of the position in which the national
government was placed, and of the principles on which it pro-
fessed to act. "The Spanish people," they said, "must leave
to their posterity an inheritance worthy of the sacrifices which
were made for obtaining it. The Supreme Junta had never lost
sight of this object; and the progress of the enemy, which had
hitherto occupied their whole attention, rendered more bitter
the reflection, that all their disasters were solely owing to the
disuse of those institutions which, in happier times, secured the
welfare and the strength of the state. The ambition of some,
and the indolence of others, had reduced those institutions to
nothing; and the Junta, from the moment of its installation,

solemnly bound itself to restore them. The time was now arrived for this great work. Desirous, therefore, that the nation should appear with the dignity due to its heroic efforts; that the rights of the people should be placed beyond the reach of encroachments; and that the sources of public felicity should run freely as soon as the war ceased, and repair whatever inveterate arbitrary power had scorched, or the present devastation had destroyed, the Junta decreed, that the Cortes should be re-established, and would immediately proceed to consider the method of convening it; for which end it would nominate a committee of five of its members. It would also investigate, in order to propose them to the nation assembled in Cortes, the means of supporting the holy war in which they were engaged; of insuring the observance of their fundamental laws; of meliorating the legislation and abolishing the abuses which had crept into it; of collecting and administering the revenue, and of reforming the system of public education. And to combine the information necessary for such discussions, it would consult the councils, provincial Juntas, tribunals, magistracies, corporations, bishops, and universities, and the opinion of intelligent and enlightened persons."

A declaration in stronger terms had been submitted to the Junta, and rejected by them at the instigation of Mr. Frere. "Spaniards," it was there said, "it is three ages since the laws on which the nation founded its defence against tyranny have been destroyed. Our fathers did not know how to preserve the liberty which had been bequeathed to them; and although all the provinces of Spain successively struggled to defend it, evil stars rendered their efforts useless. The laws, from that time forward, have been only an expression more or less tyrannical, or beneficent, of a particular will. Providence, as if to punish the loss of that prerogative of free men, has paralyzed our valour,

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*Declaration
which was
first pro-
posed.*

CHAP. arrested the progress of our intellect, and impeded our civiliza-
XXV. tion, till we have come to that condition, that an insolent tyrant
1809. formed the project of subduing the greatest nation of the globe,
without reckoning upon its will, and even despising its existence.
In vain has the prince sometimes attempted to remedy some of
the evils of the state: buildings cannot be erected on sand, and
without fundamental and constituted laws, it is useless for the
philosopher in his study, or the statesman in the theatre of busi-
ness, to exert himself for the good of the people. The best pro-
jects are not put in execution, or not carried through. Good
suggestions are followed by evil ones; economy and order, by
prodigality and rapine; a prudent and mild minister, by an
avaricious and foolish favourite; and thus the ship of the state
floats without sails and helm, till, as has happened to the Spanish
monarchy, it is dashed to pieces on a rock. How, but by the
re-establishment of freedom, could that blood be recompensed
which flows in every part of the Peninsula; those sacrifices
which Spanish loyalty is offering every instant; that moral re-
sistance, as universal as it is sublime, which disconcerts our
enemies, and renders them hopeless even in the midst of their
victories? When this dreadful contest is concluded, the Spaniard
shall say proudly to himself, 'My fathers left me slavery and
wretchedness for my inheritance; I leave to my descendants
liberty and glory.' Spaniards, this is the feeling which, by re-
flection in some, and by instinct in all, animates you now; and
it shall not be defrauded of its expectations. Our detractors
say that we are fighting to defend old abuses, and the inveterate
vices of our corrupted government; let them know that your
struggle is for the happiness, as well as the independence of your
country; that you will not depend henceforward on the uncer-
tain will or the variable temper of a single man; nor continue
to be the plaything of a court without justice, under the control

of an insolent favourite, or a capricious woman ; but that on the edifice of your ancient laws you will rear a barrier between despotism and your sacred rights. This barrier consists in a constitution to aid and support the monarch when he is just, and to restrain him when he follows evil councils. Without a constitution all reform is precarious, all prosperity uncertain ; without it the people are no more than flocks of slaves, put in motion at the order of a will, frequently unjust, and always unrestrained ; without it the forces of the whole society, which should procure the greatest advantages for all its members, are employed exclusively to satisfy the ambition, or satiate the frenzy of a few, or perhaps of one."

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When this paper was communicated to Mr. Frere, he saw serious objections, which he stated to Garay, and which the Junta, though they would otherwise have published the proclamation, readily admitted. That ambassador perceived, more clearly perhaps than any other person at that time, the danger to be apprehended from convoking a legislative assembly in a nation altogether unprepared for it by habits, feelings, education, or general knowledge. He considered it a delicate and dangerous point in every respect, and said, " that if the decision of the question were left in his hand, notwithstanding the necessity for widening the basis of the government, the failure of all the political experiments which had been made in these latter times, and the impossibility which had been found (by a fatality peculiar to the present age) of forming a permanent establishment, even in affairs less essential than the formation of a free constitution for a great nation, would make him waver. But taking the decision for granted, he thought the manner in which it was proposed to announce it likely to produce bad effects in Spain ; and he could venture," he said, " to assure D. Martin de Garay, that it would undoubtedly create them in England. If

*Objections
by Mr.
Frere.*

CHAP. XXV. 1809. the Spaniards had indeed passed three centuries under arbitrary government, they ought not to forget that it was the price which they paid for having conquered and peopled the fairest portion of the world, and that the integrity of that immense power rested solely upon these two words, Religion and the King. If the old constitution had been lost by the conquest of America, the first object should be to recover it; but in such a manner as not to lose what had cost so much in the acquisition: and for this reason, they ought to avoid, as a political poison, every enunciation of general principles, the application of which it would be impossible to limit or qualify, even when the Negroes and Indians should quote it in favour of themselves. And allowing that a bad exchange had been made in bartering the ancient national liberty for the glory and extension of the Spanish name; allowing that the error should at all hazards be done away; even though it were so," Mr. Frere said, "it did not appear becoming the character of a well-educated person to pass censures upon the conduct of his forefathers, or to complain of what he may have lost by their negligence or prodigality, still less so if it were done in the face of the world; and what should be said of a nation who should do this publicly, and after mature deliberation?"

This was true foresight, . . and yet the English ambassador approached Charybdis in his fear of Scylla. He spoke to the Spaniards of Religion and the King; in England the truest and most enlightened lovers of liberty can have no better rallying words; in Spain those words had for three hundred years meant the inquisition and an absolute monarch, whose ministers, so long as they could retain his favour, governed according to their own will and pleasure, unchecked by any constitutional control. The government did not obtain by their decree for convoking the Cortes the popularity which they had perhaps expected. The measure had been long delayed, and therefore was sup-

posed to have been unwillingly resolved on. So much, indeed, had been expected from the Central Junta, that no possible wisdom on their part, no possible success, could have answered the unreasonable demand. The disappointment of the nation was in proportion to its hopes, and the government became equally the object of suspicion and contempt. Some of the members had large estates in those provinces which were occupied by the French, and it was suspected that where their property was, there their hearts were also. Their subsequent conduct proved how greatly they were injured by this distrust. They were not censured for their first disasters, which the ablest men under like circumstances could not have averted. Had they obtained accurate intelligence of the strength and movements of the enemy when Buonaparte entered Spain; had they exerted themselves as much in disciplining troops as in raising and embodying them, and had they supplied them with regularity and promptitude; it would not have been possible to have stopped the progress of such a force. Something was allowed for the confidence which the battle of Baylen had inspired, and for the enthusiasm of the people, which the government had partaken. Neither would the nation have been disposed to condemn, even if it had perceived, errors which arose from the national character. But when, after the bitter experience of twelve whole months, no measures had been adopted for improving the discipline of the armies, or supplying them in the field, the incapacity of the Junta became glaring, and outcries against them were heard on all sides.

One of the weightiest errors for which they were censured was for not exerting themselves more effectually to bring the whole strength of the country against the invaders. They had promised to raise 500,000 men and 50,000 cavalry. Granada was the only province which supplied its full proportion, and

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Unpopularity of the Junta.

Their difficulties and errors.

CHAP. XXV. Granada even exceeded it; its contingent was about 28,000, whereas it furnished nearly forty. But this depended more upon the provincial Juntas than upon the central government, whose decrees were of no avail in those parts which the enemy possessed, and were ill observed in others, where the local administrations, from disgust, or jealousy, or indolence, or incapacity, seemed to look on as spectators of the dreadful drama, rather than to perform their parts in it, as men and as Spaniards. Neither is it to the want of numbers that their defeats were to be attributed; there were at all times men enough in the field; arms, equipments, and discipline were wanting. It is unjust to judge of the exertions of the Spanish Junta by those of the National Convention in France, who had the whole wealth and strength of a populous and rich country at their absolute disposal, and who began the revolutionary war with officers, and tacticians, and statesmen capable of wielding the mighty means which were put into their hands. The fault of the Junta was in relying too much upon numbers and bravery, and too little upon their fortresses. The general under whom the great captain Gonzalo de Cordova learnt the art of war had left them a lesson which they might profitably have remembered. He used to say, that fortresses ought to be opposed to the impatience and fury of the French, and that the place for stationing raw troops was behind walls and ramparts.

The most important errors which the Junta had hitherto committed were, the delay in convoking the Cortes, and their conduct towards Sir Arthur Wellesley's army; but the national character contributed in no slight degree to both. For it was not the known aversion of Florida Blanca to the name of a representative assembly, nor the fears of some of the Junta, nor the love of power in others, which protracted the convocation of the Cortes, so much as their reverential adherence to established

forms. This was evident in Jovellanos himself, who regarded it as equally profane and dangerous to approach this political ark of the covenant, without scrupulously observing all the ceremonies and solemnities which the law prescribed. Precedents on points of this kind are not to be found in Spain as they are in England. Antiquaries were to be consulted, archives examined, old regulations adapted to new circumstances, . . and this when the enemy was at the gates. The defect may well be pardoned, because of the virtues with which it was connected. Had the Spaniards regarded with less veneration the deeds and the institutions of their ancestors, they would never have supported that struggle which will be the wonder of succeeding ages. Their conduct toward the English army sprang from a worse fault ; from that pride which made them prone to impose upon others and upon themselves a false opinion of their strength. It is the national failing, for which they have ever been satirized, by their own writers as well as by other nations. They will rather promise and disappoint, than acknowledge their inability ; of this, their history for the last two centuries affords abundant examples ; they had yet to learn, that perfect sincerity is as much due to an ally as to a confessor. In many cases the government was itself deceived ; the same false point of honour prevailing in every department, from the lowest to the highest, it received and acted upon exaggerated statements and calculations ; but in others, it cannot be denied, that pride led to the last degree of meanness, and that promises were held out to the English general, which those who made them must have known it was impossible to perform.

Yet it must be admitted that the errors of the Junta were more attributable to the character of the nation than of the individuals ; and those individuals were placed in circumstances of unexampled difficulty. Four-and-thirty men, most of them

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CHAP. XXV. 1809. strangers to each other, and unaccustomed to public business, were brought together to govern a nation in the most perilous crisis of its history, without any thing to direct them except their own judgement, and almost without any other means than what the patriotism of the people could supply. They had troops indeed, but undisciplined, unofficered, unprovided, half armed, and half clothed. The old system of government was broken up, the new one was yet to be formed. They had neither commissariat nor treasury; the first donations and imposts were exhausted; so also were the supplies which England had liberally given, and those from America had not yet arrived. Added to these difficulties, and worse than all, was that dreadful state of moral and social anarchy, into which the nation had been thrown, and which was such that no man knew in whom he could confide. To poison food or water in time of war is a practice which all people, who are not absolute savages, have pronounced infamous by common consent; but it is a light crime compared to the means which Buonaparte employed for the subjugation of Spain, . . . means which poisoned the well-springs of social order, and loosened the very joints and fibres of society. Morla, when he betrayed his country, committed an act of treason against human nature. The evil had been great before, but when a Judas Iscariot had been found in Morla during the agony of Spain, in whom could the people confide? "Suspicion," says Jovellanos, "and hatred were conceived and spread with frightful facility. How many generals, nobles, prelates, magistrates, and lawyers, were regarded with distrust, either because of their old relations with Godoy, or because they were connected with some of the new partizans of the tyranny; or for the weakness, or indecision, or ambiguity of their conduct; or for the calumnies and insinuations which rivalry and envy excited against them! It was considered as a crime to have gone to Bayonne, to have

remained at Madrid, or resided in other places which were occupied by the intrusive government; to have submitted to swear allegiance to it, to have obeyed its orders, or to have suffered even compulsively its yoke and its contempt. What reputation was secure? who was not exposed to the attacks of envy, to the imputations of calumny, and to the violence of an agitated populace?"

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From this state of things it necessarily arose, that the Junta acted in constant fear and suspicion of those whom they employed. Their sense of weakness and their love of power increased the evil. Fearing the high spirit of Alburquerque, and the influence which rank and talents conjoined would give to his deserved popularity among the soldiers, they cramped him in a subordinate command, while they trusted those armies which were the hope of Spain to Cuesta, because they were afraid of offending him, and to Venegas, for the opposite reason, that they were sure of his obsequious submission. Some odium they incurred by permitting a trade with towns which the enemy occupied. For the sake, as was alleged, of those Spaniards who were compelled to live under the yoke, and also for the advantage of the colonies, they had granted licences for conveying sugar, cacao, and bark to those parts of the kingdom. These licences were only to be trusted to persons of known and approved patriotism, who were likewise to be strictly watched, and liable to be searched upon any suspicion. The weakness of such a concession in such a war, as well as the obvious facility which it afforded to the French and their traitorous partizans, excited just reprehension; and at the close of the year the Junta found it necessary to revoke their edict, acknowledging that, in spite of all precautions, it was found prejudicial to the public safety. Some of the members were suspected of enhancing the price of necessaries for the army, by their own secret mono-

July 14.

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CHAP. polies ; others were said to be surrounded by venal instruments,
 XXV. through whom alone they were accessible. These imputations
 1809. were probably ill-founded or exaggerated ; certain, however, it
 is, that never had any government fewer friends. Men of the
 most opposite principles were equally disaffected toward it. Its
 very defenders had no confidence in its stability, and were
 ready to forsake it. They who dreaded any diminution of the
 regal authority, could not forgive its popular origin ; they who
 aspired to lay the foundation of a new and happier order of
 things, were discontented, because the measures which were
 taken towards the reformation of the state were slowly, and, as
 they deemed, reluctantly adopted. Those wretches who were
 sold to France were the enemies of any government which re-
 sisted the usurpation ; and those whose timid natures, or short-
 sighted selfishness, disposed them to submission, naturally re-
 garded it with dislike, because it delayed the subjection of the
 country. Among the people, who were actuated by none of
 these feelings, it was sufficient to render the Junta unpopular,
 that it was unfortunate. The times rendered them suspicious ;
 their own conduct and their power made them obnoxious to
 many ; and their ill-fortune, more than their errors, made them
 disliked by all.

*Scheme for
 overthrow-
 ing them.*

Influenced by some of these motives, and perhaps in no little
 degree by jealousy, the Junta of Seville were particularly hostile
 to the government, and a plan was formed in that city for over-
 throwing it : the members were to be seized, and some of the
 most obnoxious transported to Manilla in a ship which was pre-
 pared for the purpose. Some regiments had been gained over,
 and it is said even the guards of the Junta ; but as the persons
 who designed this revolution had for their direct object the good
 of Spain, they considered it a mark of confidence due to Great
 Britain to make the English ambassador acquainted with their

purpose ; for in fact, so far were the Spanish people from regarding the interference of Great Britain with jealousy, that they were disappointed because their ally did not interfere more frequently, and with more effect. Marquis Wellesley, of whom it had been said by Mr. Whitbread that he would, if opportunity should offer, take Spain and Portugal as Buonaparte had done, had now an opportunity of showing in what manner he thought himself bound to act by a government, which he knew to be weak, and suspected to be treacherous. At the very time when this foul imputation was brought against him in parliament, he gave to that government just so much information of its danger, as, without compromising the safety of any persons concerned, enabled the Junta to prevent the intended insurrection.

The general wish was less for the convocation of the Cortes, than for the establishment of a regency, from which more unanimity and more vigour was expected, than from the present divided council. The people of Cadiz said the fate of Spain was in Marquis Wellesley's hands, that he ought to remove the Junta, and establish an energetic government. Those persons who respected hereditary claims would have had the Archbishop of Toledo appointed regent, as being the only Bourbon in the country : but he was young ; and what weighed against him more than the want of either talents or character, was, that he was believed to be governed by his sister, the wife of Godoy. Others looked to Romana, knowing his dislike to the Junta, and hoping that he would assume the government himself, or intrust it to able hands. Another project was to appoint both these personages regents, with the Duke del Infantado, and two other colleagues. It was thought that the army would gladly have seen the supreme authority vested in one of their own body, either Romana or Infantado. But both these noblemen were free from any such ambition ; and Montijo, who was always

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CHAP. XXV. intriguing for power, was so well known, that he was the last person whom any party would have trusted.

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*Commission
appointed by
the Junta.*

*Romana's
address.*

Oct. 4.

The warning which had thus been given was not lost upon the Junta, and they attended to the representations which accompanied it; they knew their weakness, and perceived their danger; admitted that the existing government was not suited to the state of affairs, and nominated a commission for the purpose of inquiring in what manner it might best be replaced. Romana was included in the commission, and upon this occasion he delivered in a paper, which, if they had required additional proof of his hostility, and their own unstable tenure, would amply have afforded it. "There were three cases," he said, "either of which ought to produce a change in the system of a government: When a nation, which ought only to obey, doubts the legitimacy of the authority to which it is to submit; when such authority begins to lose its influence; when it is not only prejudicial to the public weal, but contrary to the principles of the constitution. The existing government was objectionable upon all these grounds: it was founded upon a democratic principle of representation, inconsistent with the pure monarchical system of Spain, and with the heroic loyalty of the Spaniards, and which, if it continued, would subvert the monarchy. As often as he meditated upon this subject, he doubted the lawfulness of the existing government; and this opinion was general in the provinces through which he had passed. Among the services which he had endeavoured to perform for his king and country, it was not the least that he had yielded obedience to the orders of this government, and made the constituted authorities in Leon, Asturias, and Galicia do the same; considering this absolutely necessary to preserve the nation from anarchy. A government, though illegal, might secure the happiness of the people, if it deserved their confidence, and they respected its authority; but the exist-

ing government had lost its authority. The people, who judge of measures by the effects which they see produced, complain that our armies are weak for want of energy in the government ; that no care has been taken for supplying them ; that they have not seen the promised accounts of the public expenditure, and how the sums which have arrived from America, those which our generous allies have given, the rents of the crown, and the voluntary contributions, have been expended : they look in vain for necessary reforms ; they see that employments are not given to men of true merit, and true lovers of their country ; that some members, instead of manifesting their desire of the public good, by disinterestedness, seek to preserve their authority for their own advantage ; that others confer lucrative and honourable employments on their own dependents and countrymen ; that for this sole reason ecclesiastical offices have been filled up, the rents of which ought to have been applied to the necessities of the state ; that that unity which is necessary in the government, is not to be found, many of the Junta caring only for the interests of their particular provinces, as if they were members of some body different from that of the Spanish monarchy ; that they had not only confirmed the military appointments made by the provincial Juntas, without examining the merits of the persons appointed, but had even assigned recompences to many who were destitute of all military knowledge, having never seen service, nor performed any of those duties which were confided to them ; that the Junta, divided into sections, dispatched business in matters altogether foreign to their profession, and in which they were utterly unversed, instead of referring them to the competent and appropriate ministers ; that horses taken from their owners, instead of being sent to the armies, were dying for hunger on the dry sea-marshes ; finally, that many of the most important branches of administration were in the hands of men, suspicious, because of their conduct from the commence-

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CHAP. ment of the public misfortunes, and because they were the
XXV. creatures of that infamous favourite, who had been the author
1809. of all the general misery. Such," said Romana, "are the complaints of the people: there is but one step to disobedience; the enemy will profit by the first convulsion, and anarchy or servitude will then be the alternative."

The Marquis then stated, that the time for which some provinces had appointed their representatives to the Junta was expired; that others had empowered them not to exercise the sovereign authority, but to constitute a government which might represent the monarch: in neither case could these provinces be expected to acknowledge an authority which they had never conferred. The commission, he proceeded to say, had proposed that the Junta should reduce itself to five persons, in whom the executive power should be vested; and that in rotation each member of the existing body should enter into this supreme executive council, which should also preside over the Cortes when it was assembled. This project discovered the love of power in the Junta more unequivocally than any other part of their conduct. What Romana proposed in its stead was as prudent in itself as it was inconsistent with his previous positions. After maintaining that the powers of the existing government were from the first illegal, and that even such as they were, they had, for part of the members, expired, he recommended nevertheless that this government should, as representing legitimately or illegitimately the Cortes, appoint a regent, or a council of regency, consisting of three or of five persons, especially advising, as a proof of generosity and patriotism, that they should nominate none of their own body. A Junta should be formed, under the title of the Permanent Deputation of the Realm, to represent the Cortes till the Cortes should be assembled; it should consist of five members and a procurador-general, and one of these members should always be chosen from their Ame-

rican brethren, as forming an integral part of the nation. But the Cortes should be assembled with as little delay as circumstances would permit, and then no laws should be passed, or contributions imposed, without its consent. "If," said he, "I have in some cases connected the supreme power with the nation, I have done no more than revive the constitutional principles of the Spanish monarchy, which have been stifled by the despotism of its kings and their ministers." However hostile to the principles of civil liberty the first positions of Romana appeared, the most zealous friends of freedom might have been contented with his conclusions.

"Ought we," said he, "to fear that an adventurer, who usurps the throne of Ferdinand, should appear among us, if we had a government like this, emanating from the consent of the people, from submission to the true God, and from the necessity of our mournful and perilous situation? Would our armies then be defective in numbers, and in subordination and discipline? would they be so filled with ignorant and cowardly officers, so unprovided with food, so irregularly paid, and so destitute of all equipments? would men be appointed generals, because they would support the persons who appointed them, or because they knew how to command an army and how to save the country? With such a government, the nation would have invincible armies, the armies would have generals, the troops would be officered, and the soldiers would learn subordination and discipline. When Spain shall see that auspicious day, I shall think it the first day of her hope, and the most happy of her glorious revolution. Such," he continued, "is my opinion; but I ought not to forget that I have publicly controverted it by my actions. For who sustained your sovereign authority in the army and province which I governed? Galicia, whom didst thou obey? Didst thou respect in me any power but that of the Central Junta, or did I consent that thou shouldst separate thyself from

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CHAP. a government which I was sanctioning by my own obedience?
XXV. Asturias, didst not thou see the powerful arm upraised which
1809. thou hadst implored so earnestly, and the blow of its power fall
upon a Junta, which, after having acknowledged the sovereignty
of the Central, and received from it succours, of which my
soldiers, naked and exhausted, were in want, domineered like a
despot, and had even disobeyed the express will of our King,
D. Ferdinand? Nevertheless," said he, addressing the Central
Junta, "you rewarded this scandalous disobedience; and re-
moved me covertly from the command, in order that guilty
Spaniards might be honoured with the greater distinction. My
opinions were the same then that they are now; but circumstances
imperiously required a government, and any government is better
than none. Then it was my duty to obey; now I should not
perform what is due to my character, if I did not declare what
I believe to be required for the salvation of my country. How
indeed should I be silent; how should I suffer the fire of pa-
triotism to be extinguished, seeing the sacrifice of so many vic-
tims in our glorious cause; faithful wives murdered with their
daughters, after the most foul and unutterable outrages; nuns
driven from their cloisters, some wandering about, many more
the prey of lustful impiety; ministers of the altar forced from the
sanctuary; temples turned into stables and dens of uncleanness;
towns reduced to servitude; opulence to squalid beggary; armies
composed of the bravest spirits of the nation, which have dis-
appeared in the hottest struggles of their native land, consumed
by hunger, naked, and destitute; seeing, in fine, that such re-
venues and the liberal donations of Spain and America have
not even supplied the first necessities of the soldier? How could
I remain a tranquil spectator of such great and mournful ob-
jects, and not think them superior to the nearest personal in-
terest, to our self-love, and to our very existence? As a Span-
iard," he concluded, "I am ready to suffer a thousand deaths

in defence of our liberty ; and in my rank I have rendered homage to the descendant of the Pelayos, the Jaymes, and the Garcias. As a general, I will join myself to the last soldier who shall have resolution to revenge his country in the last period of her independence ; but as a representative of the nation, I must be excused from occupying that distinguished place, unless a legitimate government be immediately established, which foreign powers will not hesitate to acknowledge, which will represent our sovereign, and which will save a people who are resolved to die for their God, for their king, and for the happiness of their posterity."

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It is proof of full political freedom in the Spanish press at this juncture, that this paper should have appeared, being little short of a declaration of hostility against the existing government. But though the high monarchical principles with which Romana began his manifesto displeased the democratic party, and the glaring inconsistency of his proposal weakened the effect which his authority might otherwise have produced, the government felt the necessity of doing something to conciliate the nation ; they determined to convoke the Cortes, and announced the resolution in a paper which may be considered as their official apology. In this paper, without directly referring to Romana's charges, they replied to them. "Spaniards," said they, "it has seemed good to Providence that in this terrible crisis you should not be able to advance one step towards independence, without advancing one likewise toward liberty. An imbecile and decrepit despotism prepared the way for French tyranny. Political impostors then thought to deceive you by promising reforms, and announcing, in a constitution framed at their pleasure, the empire of the laws, . . a barbarous contradiction, worthy of their insolence. But the Spanish people, that people which before any other enjoyed the prerogatives and advantages of civil

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Junta.*

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CHAP. liberty, and opposed to arbitrary power the barrier which justice
XXV. has appointed, need borrow from no other nation the maxims of
1809. political prudence, and told these impudent legislators, that the
artifices of intriguers and the mandates of tyrants are not laws
for them. You ran to arms ; and fortune rendered homage to
you, and bestowed victory in reward for your ardour. The im-
mediate effect was the reunion of the state, which was at that
time divided into as many factions as provinces. Our enemies
thought they had sown among us the deadly seed of anarchy,
and did not remember that Spanish judgement and circum-
spection are always superior to French intrigue. A supreme
authority was established without contradiction and without
violence ; and the people, after having astonished the world
with the spectacle of their sublime exaltation and their victories,
filled it with admiration and respect by their moderation and
discretion.

“ The Central Junta was installed, and its first care was to
announce, that if the expulsion of the enemy was the first object
of its attention in point of time, the permanent welfare of the
state was the principal in importance ; for to leave it sunk in
the sea of old abuses, would be a crime as enormous as to deliver
you into the hands of Buonaparte ; therefore, as soon as the
whirlwind of war permitted, it resounded in your ears the name
of the Cortes, which has ever been the bulwark of civil freedom :
a name heretofore pronounced with mystery by the learned,
with distrust by politicians, and with horror by tyrants ; but
which henceforth in Spain will be the indestructible basis of the
monarchy, the most secure support of the rights of Ferdinand
and his family, a right for the people, and an obligation for the
government. That moral resistance, which has reduced our
enemies to confusion and despair in the midst of their victories,
must not receive a less reward. Those battles which are lost,

those armies which are destroyed ; those soldiers who, dispersed in one action, return to offer themselves for another ; that populace which, despoiled of almost all they possessed, returned to their homes to share the wretched remains of their property with the defenders of their country ; that struggle of barbarity on the one hand, and of invincible constancy on the other, present a whole as terrible as magnificent, which Europe contemplates with astonishment, and which history will one day record, for the admiration and example of posterity. A people so generous ought only to be governed by laws which bear the great character of public consent and common utility, . . a character which they can only receive by emanating from the august assembly which has been announced to you."

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The Junta now betrayed that undue desire of retaining their power, which, though not their only error, was the only one which proceeded from selfish considerations. " It had been recommended," they said, " that the existing government should be converted into a regency of three or of five persons, and this opinion was supported by the application of an ancient law to our present situation ; but a political position which is entirely new, occasions political forms and principles absolutely new also. To expel the French, to restore to his liberty and his throne our adored King, and to establish a solid and permanent foundation of good government, are the maxims which gave the impulse to our revolution, are those which support and direct it ; and that government will be the best which shall best promote these wishes of the Spanish nation. Does a regency promise this security ? What inconveniences, what dangers, how many divisions, how many parties, how many ambitious pretensions within and without the kingdom ; how much, and how just, discontent in our Americas, now called to have a share in the present government ! What would become of our Cortes, our

CHAP. liberty, the cheering prospects of future welfare and glory which
XXV. present themselves? What would become of the object most
1809. valuable and dear to the Spanish nation... the rights of Ferdinand? The advocates for this institution ought to shudder at the danger to which they expose them, and to bear in mind that they afford to the tyrant a new opportunity of buying and selling them. Let us bow with reverence to the venerable antiquity of the law; but let us profit by the experience of ages. Let us open our annals and trace the history of our regencies. What shall we find?... a picture of desolation, of civil war, of rapine, and of human degradation, in unfortunate Castille."

The weakness of this reasoning proved how the love of power had blinded those from whom it proceeded. The Junta wished to evade the law of the Partidas, because it did not specify a case which it could not possibly have contemplated, though the law itself was perfectly and directly relevant. They assumed it as a certain consequence of a regency, that the colonies would be disgusted; that the Cortes would not be convoked; that the rights of Ferdinand would be disregarded; and that new opportunities of corruption would be afforded to France; and they forgot to ask themselves what reason there could be for apprehending all or any of these dangers, more from a council of regency than from their own body. Romana's manifesto contained nothing more flagrantly illogical than this. Having thus endeavoured to set aside this project by alarming the nation, they admitted that the executive power ought to be lodged in fewer hands, and said, that with that circumspection, which neither exposed the state to the oscillations consequent upon every change of government, nor sensibly altered the unity of the body which it was intrusted with, they had concentrated their own authority; and that from this time those measures which required dispatch, secrecy, and energy, would be directed

by a section formed of six members, holding their office for a time.

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The remainder of the manifesto was in a worthier strain. 1809.
“Another opinion,” they said, “which objected to a regency, objected also to the Cortes as an insufficient representation, if convoked according to the ancient forms; as ill-timed, and perhaps perilous in the existing circumstances; and in fine as useless, because the provincial Juntas, which had been immediately erected by the people, were their true representatives; but as the government had already publicly declared that it would adapt the Cortes, in its numbers, forms, and classes, to the present state of things, any objection drawn from the inadequacy of the ancient forms was malicious, as well as inapplicable. Yes, Spaniards,” said they, “you are about to have your Cortes, and the national representation will be as perfect and full as it can and ought to be, in an assembly of such importance and eminent dignity. You are about to have your Cortes; and at what time, gracious God! can the nation adopt this measure better than at present? when war has exhausted all the ordinary means, when the selfishness of some, and the ambition of others, debilitate and paralyse the efforts of government; when they seek to destroy from its foundations the essential principle of the monarchy, which is union; when the hydra of federalism, so happily silenced the preceding year by the creation of the central power, dares again to raise its heads, and endeavour to precipitate us into anarchy; when the subtlety of our enemies is watching the moment of our divisions to destroy the state; this is the time, then, to collect in one point the national dignity and power, where the Spanish people may vote and call forth the extraordinary resources which a powerful nation ever has within it for its salvation. That alone can put them in motion; that alone can encourage the timidity of some, and restrain the ambition of

CHAP. others; that alone can suppress importunate vanity, puerile
XXV. pretensions, and infuriated passions. Spain will, in fine, give
1809. to Europe a fresh example of its religion, its circumspection,
and its discretion, in the just and moderate use which it is about
to make of the liberty in which it is constituted. Thus it is that
the Supreme Junta, which immediately recognised this national
representation as a right, and proclaimed it as a reward, now
invokes and implores it as the most necessary and efficacious
remedy; and has therefore resolved that the general Cortes shall
be convoked on the first day of January in the next year, in order
to enter on their august functions the first of March following.
When that happy day has arrived, the Junta will say to the
representatives of the nation,

“ ‘ Ye are met together, O fathers of your country! and re-
established in all the plenitude of your rights, after a lapse of
three centuries. Called to the exercise of authority by the
unanimous voice of the kingdom, the individuals of the Supreme
Junta have shown themselves worthy of the confidence reposed
in them, by employing all their exertions for the preservation of
the state. When the power was placed in our hands, our armies,
half formed, were destitute; our treasury was empty, and our
resources uncertain and distant. We have maintained in the
free provinces unity, order, and justice; and in those occupied
by the enemy, we have exerted our endeavours to preserve
patriotism and loyalty. We have vindicated the national honour
and independence in the most complicated and difficult diplo-
matic negotiations; and we have made head against adversity,
ever trusting that we should overcome it by constancy. We
have, without doubt, committed errors, and would willingly,
were it possible, redeem them with our blood; but in the con-
fusion of events, among the difficulties which surrounded us,
who could be certain of always being in the right? Could we

be responsible, because one body of troops wanted valour and another confidence; because one general had less prudence and another less good fortune? Much, Spaniards, is to be attributed to your inexperience, much to circumstances, but nothing to our intention; that ever has been to deliver our King, to preserve to him a throne for which the people has made such sacrifices, and to maintain it free, independent, and happy. We have decreed the abolition of arbitrary power from the time we announced the re-establishment of our Cortes. Such is, O Spaniards! the use we have made of the unlimited authority confided to us; and when your wisdom shall have established the basis and form of government most proper for the independence and good of the state, we will resign it into the hands you shall point out, contented with the glory of having given to the Spaniards the dignity of a nation legitimately constituted.' "

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Had the nation been more alive to such hopes as were thus held out, the pressure of events and the presence of imminent danger would have distracted their thoughts from all speculative subjects. Frustrated as their expectations of immediate deliverance had been, their confidence was not shaken; the national temper led them to think lightly of every disaster, but to exaggerate every trifling success; and the defeats at Arzobispo and Almonacid were less felt or thought of by the body of the people, than the successful exploits of those predatory bands, who, under the name of *Guerillas*, were now in action every where. The government partook of this disposition; and it must be ascribed as much to this as to policy, that the official as well as the provincial journals published every adventure of this kind more fully and circumstantially than some of those actions wherein their armies had disappeared. The example which Mina and the Empecinado had set was followed with alacrity and tempting success, rich opportunities being offered by the

CHAP. requisition of plate from churches and from individuals, which the
 XXV. intrusive government was at this time enforcing. The guerillas
 1809. were on the watch, and intercepted no trifling share of the
September. spoils. One party surprised a convoy with eighty *quintals* of silver
 near Segovia. The French, who found themselves sorely annoyed
 by this species of warfare, though they were as yet far from ap-
 prehending all they should suffer by it, endeavoured to raise
 a counter-force of the same kind in Navarre, under the name
 of Miquelets. But that appellation, which was so popular
 among the Spaniards, had no attraction for them when it was
 pressed into the usurper's service, and the scheme only evinced
 the incapacity of those who projected it, for the guerillas de-
 pended for information, shelter, every thing which could con-
 tribute either to their success or their safety, upon the good will
 of their countrymen; who then would engage in an opposite
 service, with the certainty that every Spaniard would regard him
 as an enemy and traitor, and as such endeavour secretly or
 openly to bring about his destruction?

*D. Julian
 Sanchez.*

Among the persons who became most eminent for their
 exploits in this desultory warfare, D. Julian Sanchez began at
 this time to be distinguished. He raised a company of lancers
 in the district of Ciudad Rodrigo, and acted with such effect
 against the enemy in the plains of Castille, that General Mar-
 chand, who commanded the sixth corps at Salamanca, threatened
 to execute the vengeance which the guerillas at once eluded and
 defied, upon those whom he suspected of favouring them. Speci-
 fying, therefore, eight of the principal sheep-owners in that part
 of the country, he declared that they should be kept under a
 military guard in their own houses, and the severest measures
 be enforced against their persons and property, if the bands of
 robbers, as he called them, did not totally disappear within
 eight days after the date of his proclamation. He declared also

that the priests, *alcaldes*, lawyers, and surgeons of every village, should be responsible with their lives for any disorders committed by the guerillas within their respective parishes; adding, that every village and every house which the inhabitants might abandon on the approach of the French, should be burnt. This served only to call forth an indignant reply from Sanchez, containing some of those incontrovertible truths which made the better part of the French themselves detest the service in which they were employed.

Ney's corps was at this time in Salamanca, under General Marchand, occupying also Ledesma and Alba de Tormes. Soult's head-quarters were at Plasencia; he occupied Coria, Galesteo, and the banks of the Tietar and the Tagus, as far as the Puente del Arzobispo; Mortier's corps was at Talavera, Oropesa, La Calzada de Oropesa, and Naval Moral; Victor's advanced posts were at Daymiel, his head-quarters at Toledo; Sebastiani was at Fuenlebrada, and his corps extended from Aranjuez to Alcala. On the side of La Mancha or Extremadura, they could not hope to open a way to Seville, unless the government by an act of suicidal madness should encounter the certain consequences of a general action. Remaining, therefore, on the defensive here, they prepared for offensive operations on the side of Salamanca, with a view to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, and a third invasion of Portugal. Sir Robert Wilson's representations respecting the importance of that point had not been neglected by the government; the force which the Duque del Parque commanded there was now respectable in numbers, and had acquired some experience as well as confidence in that desultory warfare which Sir Robert had begun, and which D. Julian Sanchez had so well continued. Preparatory to their movements on this quarter, the French attempted to carry Astorga by a sudden attack, for which purpose, with a force of

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repulsed
from Astor-
ga.*

CHAP. 2600 men, they advanced from the Ezla, and endeavoured to
 XXV. force the Bishop's Gate. D. Jose Maria de Santocildes, who
 1809. commanded there, was neither wanting in principle nor in con-
 October. duct. His measures for defence were well taken and well
 Oct. 9. executed, and after a four hours' action, the enemy retreated
 with the loss of more than 200 men.

Battle of
 Tamames.
 Oct. 18.

A movement of more importance was presently undertaken against the Duque del Parque, who had taken a strong position on the heights near Tamames. Marchand commanded the French corps, consisting of 10,000 foot, 1200 horse, with fourteen pieces of cannon; and nothing but his contempt of the enemy could have induced him to attack them in such a post. He came on in full confidence, forming his columns with ostentatious display, as if to exhibit the perfect facility with which their evolutions were made. As it was soon apparent that the main attack would be upon the left, being the weakest part of the position, the Duke ordered Count de Belveder, with half the reserve, to support this point. Carrera, who commanded the left wing, stood the attack well; a small party of cavalry, still further to the left, were posted in a wood, from whence it was intended that they should issue, and charge the flank of the enemy; but Carrera's second brigade making a movement for the purpose of allowing their artillery to play, the French horse charged them at full speed before they were well formed, broke in upon them, and cut down the Spaniards at their guns: . . . for a moment the day seemed lost. The Duke, with his staff, came up in time to the place of danger. Mendizabal, who was second in command, sprang from his horse, and rallied those who were falling back; the young Principe de Anglona distinguished himself in the same manner; and Carrera, whose horse had received two musket-balls, and one wound with a sabre, put himself at the head of his men, charged the French with the bayonet, routed

them and recovered the guns. Meantime an attack was made upon the right and centre; but here the Spaniards were more strongly posted, and D. Francisco de Losada, who commanded in that part, repulsed them. They retreated in great disorder, leaving more than 1100 on the field; their wounded were not less than 2000.

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On the third day after the battle, the Duke moved forward, hoping to surprise the enemy in Salamanca. He crossed at Ledesma on the 23d, and marched all the night of the 24th; at daybreak he reached the heights which command Salamanca to the northward, but the French had retreated during the night to Toro, carrying with them the church plate and all their other plunder. They had remained five days in hope of receiving a reinforcement from Kellermann, who, with a weak corps, occupied the country between Segovia and Burgos; but seeing no succour approach, the loss which they had sustained rendered it necessary for them to retire with all speed, upon the unexpected intelligence that the Spaniards were within three leagues of the city.

*The French
retire from
Salamanca.
Oct. 21.*

The people of Salamanca did not long enjoy their deliverance. While Kellermann was reinforced with one brigade, another from Dessoles' division was directed toward that city, preparatory to more important movements; activity having now been given to the French armies, and union, which had long been wanted, by the appointment of Marshal Soult to the rank of Major-General in place of Marshal Jourdan, who was recalled to Paris. This change was highly acceptable to the troops in general, though there prevailed a feeling of personal ill-will toward Soult on the part of some of his fellow marshals which had not existed toward his predecessor; but more confidence was reposed in him, the reputation which Jourdan had obtained in the days of the National Convention not having

*Marshal
Soult ap-
pointed Ma-
jor-general.*

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*The Junta
resolve on
risking a
general
action.*

*Exposicion
de la Junta
Central.
Ramo Di-
plomatico,
p. 27.*

*Arceizaga
appointed
to the com-
mand.*

been supported by his subsequent fortune. The Duque del Parque, perceiving that more serious operations were likely to be directed against him, urged the government to act on the offensive in La Mancha, as a means of averting the danger from himself; and the Junta needed little encouragement at this time for measures of the most desperate temerity. The ablest members of that body partook so strongly of the national temper, that they were wholly incapacitated for understanding the real state either of their own armies, or of the allies, or of their enemies. Their infatuation might seem incredible, if it were not proved both by their conduct and by documents which they themselves laid before the nation, stating upon what grounds they had acted. They had persuaded themselves that if Sir Arthur, after Cuesta rejoined him, had given battle to Soult, according to his original intention, the destruction of Soult's army would have been easy and certain, the annihilation of Victor's army easy as a consequent measure, the recovery of Madrid easy, and the expulsion of the French as far as the Ebro, or even to the Pyrenees. By some fatality, they said, the British General had chosen that line of conduct which was precisely the most prejudicial to the Spanish cause. By some stranger fatality they themselves persisted in believing that the British army had been at all times amply supplied with means of subsistence and of transport, that it was at any time capable of advancing, and, (as if themselves incapable of understanding that the British Commander and the British Ambassador meant what they said in their repeated representations), that it would advance if the Spaniards evinced the determination and the ability to act without them. And with this persuasion they deluded their General as well as themselves.

Rash as he was, even Cuesta would hardly have been so deluded. Upon his resignation Eguia had only held the com-

mand while the government could look about for a successor. Castaños was under a cloud; the inquiry which he demanded had never been granted, and though public opinion was beginning to regard him as his past services and real worth deserved, there was no thought of again employing him. Alburquerque was an object of jealousy; Romana of dislike and fear. Areizaga therefore, who had been highly commended by Blake for his conduct in the battle of Alcañiz, was removed from the command at Lerida to be placed at the head of 50,000 men. Alburquerque, who had from 9000 to 10,000 in Extremadura, was ordered to join Parque, and place himself under his orders; while Areizaga, with the greatest force that they could collect, was instructed to advance upon Madrid. What they knew concerning the state of that city might well excite their feelings, and raise in them a strong desire of delivering its inhabitants from their bondage; but there was nothing to encourage the extravagant hopes which they entertained. The national feeling existed nowhere in greater strength, though there was no other place wherein so many traitors were collected; all who in other parts of the country had made themselves conspicuous as partizans of Joseph, having fled thither when they could not abide in safety elsewhere. To leave the capital was an enterprise of the utmost danger for those who were willing to sacrifice every thing, and take their chance in the field against the invaders: any one might enter; but in the course of a few hours it was known who the stranger was, whence he came, where he was harboured, what was his business, and who were his connexions, . . . every thing which the most vigilant police, and the most active system of espionage could discover. The tradesmen and those whose means of subsistence were not destroyed by the revolution were oppressed by heavy and frequent exactions; the Intruder's ministers knew the impolicy of this, but neverthe-

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1809.

October.*State of
Madrid.*

CHAP. less were compelled to impose these burdens ; and after the
 XXV. atrocities which they had sanctioned, they could suffer nothing
 1809. more either in character or in peace of mind. Otherwise, even
October. in Madrid, where a strong military force kept every thing in
 order, and where none of the immediate evils of war were felt,
 there were sights which might have wrung the heart. Men and
 women, who had been born and bred in opulence, begged in
 the streets, as soon as evening had closed, . . the feelings of better
 times preventing them from exposing their misery in the day-
 light. But what most wounded the Spanish temper was the
 condition of their clergy, and monks, and friars, who, suffer-
 ing as it were as confessors under the intrusive government,
 worked as daily labourers for their support, employing in hard
 and coarse labour hands which, the Spaniards said, were con-
 secrated by the use of holy oil, and by contact with the Body of
 our Lord !

Jovellanos,
 § 103.

Overlooking all impediments in the way of their desires, the Junta calculated so surely upon delivering the capital, that they fixed upon a captain-general, a governor, and a corregidor, who were to enter upon their functions as soon as it should be recovered ; and they charged Jovellanos and Riquelme to draw up provisional regulations for securing tranquillity there when the enemy should withdraw. This confidence arose from a national character which repeated disasters could neither subdue nor correct. The rashness with which they determined to bring on a general action, at whatever risk, appeared to them a prudent resolution. Now that the continental war was terminated, and Buonaparte had no other employment for his armies, it was certain that more troops than had been withdrawn from Spain would be marched into it, for the purpose of effecting its subjugation ; they thought it therefore the best and surest policy to make a great effort before the numbers of the enemy should be

thus formidably increased. Former failures had neither dis-
heartened nor instructed them; and they furthered the equip-
ment of the army with a zeal which, if it had been excited two
months before in providing for their allies, might have realized
the hopes wherein they now indulged.

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1809.
November.

The new commander partook the blind confidence of his
government. In some degree he appears to have been deceived
by them; for he was neither informed of Lord Wellington's
determination not to advance, nor of the condition of the British
army, which was such at that time as to render an advance im-
possible. From causes which physiologists have not yet been
able to ascertain, the country where they were quartered, upon
the Guadiana, is peculiarly unhealthy during the dry season,
when that river ceases to be a stream, and, like its feeders, is
reduced to a succession of detached pools in the deeper parts of
its course. The troops suffered so much more than the natives,
partly because the disease laid stronger hold on constitutions
which were not accustomed to it, and partly from the peculiar
liableness of men, when congregated in camps, to receive and
communicate endemic maladies, that more than a third of their
whole number were on the sick list; and the inhabitants of the
country, aware as they were that this plague belonged to it,
ascribed its greater prevalence and malignity among the strangers
to their having eaten mushrooms, holding the whole tribe them-
selves in abhorrence, and not thinking the ordinary causes of
the disease could account for the effects which they witnessed.
Areizaga was ignorant of all this, and the government allowed
him to advance with an expectation that the British army was to
follow and support him.

*Condition
of the Bri-
tish army.*

Knowing the condition of that army, it seems almost in-
credible that the Junta could have deceived themselves when
they thus deceived their general. But unlikely as it was that

*Disposition
of the
French
troops.*

CHAP. they should have given orders for a forward movement of such
XXV. importance, without such co-operation, they hoped perhaps
1809. to deceive the enemy, by reports that Lord Wellington and
November. Alburquerque would advance along the valley of the Tagus.
The French were never able to obtain good intelligence of the English plans; they could, however, to a certain point, foresee them, as a skilful chess-player apprehends the scheme of an opponent who is not less expert than himself at the game; they had learnt to respect the British army in the field, but they thought the British Commander was more likely from caution to let pass an opportunity of success, than to afford the enemy one by rashness. This opinion they had formed from the events of the late campaign, being fully aware of the danger to which they had been exposed, and unacquainted with the difficulties which had frustrated Sir Arthur's plans, . . . difficulties indeed which they who were accustomed always to take whatever was needful for their armies either from friend or foe, without any other consideration than that of supplying their own immediate wants, would have regarded with astonishment, if not contempt. When Marshal Soult therefore prepared at this time to act against the Spaniards, the English force hardly entered into his calculations. He had 70,000 men available for immediate service in one direction. One corps of these, under Laborde, watched the Tagus, with an eye to Alburquerque's movements. Victor observed the roads from Andalusia to Toledo and Aranjuez, having his cavalry in advance at Madridejos and Consuegra; Sebastiani, with the fourth corps, was in the rear of Victor, securing the capital, from which neighbourhood a division had been sent to support Marchand after his defeat at Tamames. The reserve, under Mortier, was at Talavera; Gazan occupied Toledo with two weak regiments; and Joseph was with his guards at Aranjuez, relying upon the fortune of Napo-

leon, and now, when the Continent was effectually subdued, and reinforcements had already begun to enter the Peninsula, believing himself in secure possession of the crown of Spain.

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On the 3d of November, Areizaga's army, consisting of 43,000 foot, 6600 cavalry, and sixty pieces of cannon, began their march from the foot of the Sierra Morena into the plains, taking with them eight days' provision. The advanced guard, of 2000 cavalry under Freire, were one day's march in front; the infantry followed in seven divisions, then the rest of the cavalry in reserve, and the head-quarters last, marching from twenty to thirty miles a day; they had no tents, and took up their quarters at night in the towns upon the road. They advanced forces by Daymiel on the left, others along the high road to Madrid, by Valdepeñas and Manzanares. The French retired before them, and in several skirmishes of cavalry the Spaniards were successful. Latour Maubourg escaped with a considerable body of horse from Madrilejos by the treachery of a deserter, who apprised him of his danger just in time for him to get out of the town as the Spaniards entered it. They continued their way through Tembleque to Dos Barrios; then, by a flank march, reached S. Cruz de la Zarza; threw bridges across the Tagus, and passed a division over. Here they took a position; the French pushed their patrols of cavalry near the town, and Areizaga drew out his army in order of battle. An action upon that ground did not suit the enemy, and the Spanish general was frantic enough to determine upon leaving the mountains, and giving them battle in the plain.

*Areizaga
advances
from the
Sierra Mo-
rena.*

Baron Crossand, who was employed in Spain on a mission from Austria, was with the army, and, dreading the unavoidable consequences of such a determination, presented a memorial to Areizaga, reminding him, that only the preceding day he had admitted how dangerous it would be thus to hazard the welfare

*The Aus-
trian com-
missioner
remonstrates
against his
purpose.*

Nov. 16.

CHAP. of his country. None of the motives, he said, which should induce
 XXV. a prudent general to risk a battle were applicable in the present
 1809. case ; he had nothing to urge him forward, and the most fertile
 November. provinces of Spain were in his rear : by meeting the enemy upon
 their own ground, the advantage of position was voluntarily
 given them, and the superiority of numbers which the Spaniards
 possessed was not to be considered as an advantage, in their
 state of discipline ; so far indeed was it otherwise that the French
 founded part of their hopes upon the disorder into which the
 Spaniards would fall in consequence of their own multitude. A
 victory might procure the evacuation of Madrid and of the
 two Castilles, but these results were light in the balance when
 weighed against the consequences of defeat. The wisest plan of
 operations was to entrench himself upon the strong ground which
 the left bank of the Tagus afforded ; from thence he might send
 out detachments toward Madrid and in all directions, and act in
 concert with the Dukes of Parque and Alburquerque, patience
 and caution rendering certain their ultimate success.

*Battle of
 Ocaña.*

These representations were lost upon Areizaga ; he marched
 back to Dos Barrios, and then advanced upon Ocaña into the open
 country. About 800 French and Polish cavalry were in the town ;
 they were driven out by the Spanish horse ; a skirmish ensued, in
 which four or five hundred men fell on both sides. In this affair
 the French general Paris was borne out of the saddle by a
 lancer, and laid dead on the field. He was an old officer, whom
 the Spaniards represent as a humane and honourable man, re-
 gretting that he should have perished in such a cause. Areizaga
 bivouacued that night ; and the French, who had now collected
 the corps of Sebastiani and Mortier, under command of the
 latter, crossed the Tagus before morning. At daybreak Arei-
 zaga ascended the church tower of Ocaña, and seeing the array
 and number of the enemy, it is said that he perceived, when too

late, what would be the result of his blind temerity. He arrayed his army in two equal parts, one on each side the town; and his second line was placed so near the first, that, if the first were thrown into disorder, there was not room for it to rally. Most of the cavalry were stationed in four lines upon the right flank, a disposition neither imposing in appearance nor strong in reality. The artillery was upon the two flanks.

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About seven in the morning, Zayas, who had often distinguished himself, attacked the French cavalry with the advanced guard, and drove them back. Between eight and nine the cannonade began. The Spanish artillery was well served; it dismounted two of the French guns, and blew up some of their ammunition-carts. Mortier having reconnoitred the ground, determined to make his chief attack upon the right, and, after having cannonaded it for a while from a battery in his centre, he ordered Leval, with the Polish and German troops, to advance, and turn a ravine which extended from the town nearly to the end of this wing of the Spanish army. Leval formed his line in compact columns; the Spaniards met them along the whole of their right wing, and their first line wavered. It was speedily reinforced; the right wing was broken, and a charge of cavalry completed the confusion on this side. The left stood firm, and cheered Areizaga as he passed; an able general might yet have secured a retreat, but he was confounded, and quitted the field, ordering this part of the army to follow him. Lord Macduff, who was with the Spaniards, then requested the second in command to assume the direction; but while he was exerting himself to the utmost, the French cavalry broke through the centre, and the rout was complete. The Spaniards were upon an immense plain, every where open to the cavalry, by whom they were followed and cut down on all sides. Victor, who crossed the Tagus at Villa Mensiger, pursued all night. All

CHAP. XXV. their baggage was taken, almost all their artillery ; according to the French account, 4000 were killed, and 26,000 made prisoners : on no occasion have the French had so little temptation to exaggerate. Their own loss was about 1700.

1809.
November.

This miserable defeat was the more mournful, because the troops that day gave proof enough both of capacity and courage to show how surely, under good discipline and good command, they might have retrieved the military character of their country. No artillery could have been better served. The first battalion of guards, which was 900 strong, left upon the field fourteen officers, and half its men. Four hundred and fifty of a Seville regiment, which had distinguished itself with Wilson at Puerto de Baños, entered the action, and only eighty of them were accounted for when the day was over. Miserably commanded as the Spaniards were, there was a moment when the French, in attempting to deploy, were thrown into disorder, by their well-supported fire, and success was at that moment doubtful. The error of exposing the army in such a situation must not be ascribed wholly to incapacity in Areizaga, who had distinguished himself not less for conduct than courage at Alcañiz ; it was another manifestation of the national character, of that obstinacy which no experience could correct, of that spirit which no disasters could subdue.

*Treatment
of the pri-
soners.*

There was none of that butchery in the pursuit by which the French had disgraced themselves at Medellin. The intrusive government had at that time acted with the cruelty which fear inspires ; feeling itself secure now, its object was to take prisoners, and force them into its own service ; and for this purpose a different sort of cruelty was employed. While the Madrid Gazette proclaimed that the French soldiers behaved with more than humanity to the captured Spaniards, that they might gratify their Emperor's brother by treating his misled subjects with this

kindness, the treatment which those prisoners received was in reality so brutal, that if the people of Madrid had had no other provocation, it would have sufficed for making them hate and execrate the Intruder, and those by whom his councils were directed. They were plundered without shame or mercy by the French troops, and any who were recognised as having been taken before, or as having belonged to Joseph's levies, were hurried before a military tribunal, and shot in presence of their fellows. Even an attempt to escape was punished with death by these tribunals, whose sentence was without appeal! They were imprisoned in the Retiro, and in the buildings attached to the Museum, where they were ill fed and worse used; and they who had friends, relations, or even parents, in Madrid, were neither allowed to communicate with, nor to receive the slightest assistance from them. By such usage about 8000 were forced into a service, from which they took the first opportunity to desert, most of them in the course of a few months having joined the guerillas.

CHAP.
XXV.
1809.
November.

Rigel, 2.
406.

The defeat of Areizaga drew after it that of the Duke del Parque. Too confident in his troops, he remained in his advanced situation, amid the open country of Castille, till the army which he had defeated was reinforced by Kellermann's division from Valladolid. The Duke knew there were 8000 French infantry and 2000 horse in Medina del Campo, and, thinking that this was all their force, took a position at Carpio, upon the only rising ground in those extensive plains, and there waited for their attack. The enemy advanced slowly, as if waiting for other troops to come up. Seeing this, the Duke gave orders to march against them, and the French retreated, fighting as they fell back, from about three in the afternoon till the close of day, when they entered Medina del Campo. The Duke then discovered that a far greater force than he had expected was at

CHAP.
XXV.

1809.

November.

*Battle of
Alba de
Tormes.*

hand, and fell back to his position at Carpio, there to give his troops rest, for they had been thirty hours without any. At midnight the French also retired upon their reinforcements. During the following day the Duke obtained full intelligence; it now became too evident that he could no longer continue in his advanced situation, and he began his retreat from Carpio in the night. In the evening of the next day he halted a few hours at Vittoria and Cordovilla, and at ten that night continued his march, being pursued by Kellermann, who did not yet come near enough to annoy him. On the morning of the 28th he reached Alba de Tormes, and there drew up his troops to resist the enemy, who were now close upon him. He posted them upon the heights which command the town on both sides of the Tormes, in order to cover his rear guard, the bridges, and the fords; the whole cavalry was on the left bank. General Lorcet began the attack, and was repulsed by the infantry and artillery: two brigades of French horse then charged the right wing of the Spaniards; their cavalry were ordered to meet the charge; whether from some accidental disorder, or sudden panic, they took to flight without discharging a shot, or exchanging a single sword stroke; part of them were rallied and brought back, but the same disgraceful feeling recurred; they fled a second time, and left the right flank of the army uncovered: the French then charged the exposed wing with an overpowering force, and, in spite of a brave resistance, succeeded in breaking through. The victorious cavalry then charged the left of the Spaniards; but here it was three times repulsed. Mendizabal and Carrera formed their troops into an oblong square, and every farther attempt of the enemy was baffled: night now came on; this body, taking advantage of the darkness, retreated along the heights on the left bank of the town, and the Duke then gave orders to fall back in the direction of Tamames. They marched

in good order till morning, when, as they were within eight miles of that town, and of the scene of their former victory, a small party of the enemy's horse came in sight, and a rumour ran through the ranks that the French were about to charge them in great force. The very men who had fought so nobly only twelve hours before now threw away firelocks, knapsacks, and whatever else encumbered them: the enemy were not near enough to avail themselves of this panic; and the Duke, with the better part of his troops, reached the Peña de Francia, and in that secure position halted to collect again the fugitives and stragglers. Kellermann spoke of 3000 men killed and 2000 prisoners; and all the artillery of the right wing was taken.

By this victory the French were enabled without farther obstacle to direct their views against Ciudad Rodrigo, and to threaten Portugal: and Lord Wellington removed in consequence from his position in the vicinity of Badajos to the north of the Tagus, there to take measures against the operations which he had long foreseen. Alburquerque's little army was now the only one which remained unbroken; but what was this against the numerous armies of the French? even if it were sufficient to cover Extremadura, what was there on the side of La Mancha to secure Andalusia, and Seville itself? Every effort was made to collect a new army under Areizaga at the passes of the Sierra, and to reinforce the Duke del Parque also;... but the danger was close at hand.

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XXV.1809.
November.

0081

CHAPTER XXVI.

SIEGE OF GERONA.

1809. WHILE the Central Junta directed its whole attention toward Madrid, and expended all its efforts in operations, so ill concerted and ill directed, that the disastrous termination was foreseen with equal certainty both by their friends and foes, Catalonia was left to defend itself; and a sacrifice of heroic duty, not less memorable than that which Zaragoza had exhibited, was displayed at Gerona.

Gerona.

Gerona (the Gerunda of the Romans, a place of such unknown antiquity that fabulous historians have ascribed its foundation to Geryon) is situated upon the side and at the foot of a hill where the little river Onar, which divides the city from the suburbs, falls into the Ter. Two centuries ago it was second only to Barcelona in size and importance; other places in the principality, more favourably situated for commerce, and less overlaid with monks and friars, had now outgrown it, for of about 14,000 inhabitants not less than a fourth were clergy and religioners. In the thirteenth century it was distinguished by the defence* which Ramon Folch of Cardona made there against Philip III. of France; a memorable siege, not only for the resolution with

* *Non est memoria . . . quod in castro vel civitate aliquâ tales fuerint defensores.*
Gesta Comitum Barcinonensium, Marca Hispanica, 568.

which Ramon held out, and for the ability with which he obtained honourable terms at last, concealing from Philip the extremity of famine to which the place was reduced, but also for the singular destruction which was brought upon the besiegers by a plague of * flies. Their bite is said to have been fatal to the

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* This would naturally be deemed miraculous, and the miracle was ascribed to St. Narcissus and other saints, whose graves the French had disturbed, and scattered their remains about. One statement is, that the flies proceeded from St. Narcissus's tomb. *Muscae istae partim erant lividae, partim virides, in quadam sui parte colorem rubeum denotantes.* (Gesta Com. Barcin. 569, ut supra.) *Ceterum, qui locorum periti sunt quae circum Gerundam visuntur, says the Archbishop Pierre de Marca, ii testantur haud procul ea urbe videri rupes ex quibus vulgò oriuntur etiamnum muscae quales e sepulchro Sancti Narcissi prodisse fabulantur. Quod si ita est, non ultra inquirendum est in earum originem quae Gallico tum exercitui insultarunt, quas manifestum est ortas esse ex rupibus illis.* Marca Hispanica, 468.

The flies are described differently in the *Acta Sanctorum* (Mart. t. ii. 624), where the miracles of St. Narcissus are given *ex hispanico Ant. Vincentii Domenecci.* *Ex ipso sancti praesulis sepulchro exierunt innumera examina muscarum, caeruleo partim, partim viridi colore tinctarum, rubrisque striis dispunctarum; quae virorum equorumque subingressae nares, non prius deserebant occupatos, quam spiritum vitamque abstulissent, concidentibus humi mortuis. Tanti enim erat veneni efficacia, ut seu virum seu equum momordissent, morsum continuò mors sequeretur.* These authorities are given because they relate to a curious fact in natural history, . . . if there be any truth in the story; and that there was a plague of insects can hardly be doubted. That their bite was so deadly, and that they proceeded from the tomb, I should have hesitated as little as the reader to disbelieve, if some other accounts had not seemed to show that both these apparent improbabilities may be possible. It is said that one part of Louisiana is infested by a fly whose bite is fatal to horses. And about twenty years ago, at Lewes, when a leaden coffin, which had been interred about threescore years, was opened, the legs and thigh-bones of the skeleton were found to be "covered with myriads of flies, of a species, perhaps, totally unknown to the naturalist. The wings were white, and the spectators gave it the name of the coffin fly. The lead was perfectly sound, and presented not the least chink or crevice for the admission of air:" and the flies which were thus released are described as being active and strong on the wing.

If, however, some long lost species had re-appeared from the tomb, and multi-

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horses, of which such numbers died, that their carcasses produced pestilence; two-thirds of the army perished, and the remainder found it necessary to retreat into their own country, carrying home in their coffins the chiefs who had led them into Spain. In the succession-war, Gerona was signalized by the desperate resistance which it made against Philip V. After it had fallen, the Catalans blockaded it during eight months; M. Berwick raised the blockade, and the French minister proposed to him to demolish the works; his plea was, that the expense of keeping a garrison there might be spared; but his intent, that the Spaniards might have one strong-hold the less upon their frontier. But Berwick required an order from Louis XIV. to warrant him in a proceeding which must necessarily offend the King of Spain; and Louis was then withheld by a sense of decency from directly ordering what he wished to have had done. The fortifications after that time had been so neglected, that when Arthur Young was there in 1787, he thought they were not strong enough to stop an army for half an hour: the old walls, however, had now been well repaired; and the city was also protected by four forts upon the high ground above it. But its principal defence was the citadel, called here, as at Barcelona, Monjuic, which commanded it from an eminence about sixty fathoms distant. This was a square fort, 240 yards in length on each side, with four bastions, and for outworks the four towers of Saints Luis, Narcis, Daniel, and Juan.

*Force of the
garrison.*

*Vol. i. p.
362, 646.*

The garrison amounted only to 3400 men, but they were commanded by Mariano Alvares, and the inhabitants were encouraged by having twice driven the enemy from their walls.

plied so as to become a plague, it would have continued in the country. But if Pierre de Marca was rightly informed that a fly which corresponds in appearance to the description is still found there, it certainly possesses none of the tremendous powers which the legend ascribes to it.

After the battle of Valls it was certain that the French, having no force to oppose them in the field, would make a third attempt to obtain possession of this important place, and that they would make it in sufficient strength and with ample means, lest they should incur the disgrace of a third repulse. No means, therefore, were neglected of providing for defence; but while every military preparation which the circumstances permitted was made, Alvarez felt and understood that his surest reliance must be placed upon that moral resistance of which the Zaragozans had set them so illustrious an example. Like the crusaders of old, the inhabitants took the cross, and formed eight companies of an hundred men each; the women also, maids and matrons alike, enrolled themselves in an association which they called the Company of St. Barbara, to perform whatever duties lay within their power, as their countrywomen had done at Zaragoza. The French scoffed at these things, as indicating the fanaticism of a people whom they considered greatly inferior to themselves. Light-minded, as well as light-hearted, and regardless of any higher motive than may be found in the sense of mere military duty (for it was the direct object of Buonaparte's institutions to eradicate or preclude every better principle), they were incapable of perceiving that the state of mind which their nefarious conduct had called forth sanctified such measures.

These were demonstrations of the religious feeling with which the Geronans devoted themselves to the cause of their country, and to the duty of self-defence. With more reason might the French deride the part which in that city was assigned to the Patron Saint, though such derision would come with little consistency from those among them who professed to believe in the Romish church. St. Narcis, as the Saint is called in the clipt language of that province, had obtained as much credit for defeating Duhesme in his first attempt upon Gerona, as for sending

CHAP.
XXVI.
1809.

*Crusaders
enrolled.*

*Company of
St. Barbara.*

*St. Narcis
appointed
generalis-
simo.*

CHAP. the plague of flies against the French King Philip. A meeting
 XXVI. had in consequence been held of the municipality, the chapter,
 1809. the heads of the religious houses, and all the chief persons of
 the city, Colonel Julien Bolivar presiding as the king's lieutenant. Resolutions were passed, that seeing St. Narcis had always vouchsafed his especial protection to the principality of Catalonia, as had been manifested during the former invasions of the French, and recently by the defeat of Duhesme, which was wholly owing to his favour; and seeing moreover that for the purpose of resisting the tyranny and oppression of Napoleon Buonaparte it was necessary to appoint a commander who should be capable of directing their operations and repulsing such an enemy, . . . no one could so worthily fill that office as the invincible patron and martyr St. Narcis; and therefore, in the name of Ferdinand the King, they nominated him Generalissimo of all the Spanish forces by land and sea, and confided to him the defence of Gerona, of its district, and of the whole principality. On the following Sunday the Junta, with all the clergy and other persons of distinction, went in procession to notify this appointment to the Saint in his shrine in the church of St. Felix; the shrine was opened, and a general's staff, a sword, and a belt, all richly ornamented, were deposited by the relics of the chosen commander; and the enthusiastic joy which the ceremony excited was such, that the Spaniards said it seemed as if the glory of the Lord had descended and filled the church, manifesting that their devotion was approved and blessed by heaven!

*All mention
 of capitula-
 ting forbid-
 den.*

This display of national character and of Romish superstition had taken place in the first fervour of their feelings after a signal deliverance. The spirit of the Geronans did not fail when danger was again at hand; and the governor, seeing and relying upon this disposition of the people, thought it advisable, before the time of trial approached, to restrain by fear the few treacherous

subjects who might be waiting, when opportunity offered, to declare themselves ; he published an edict, therefore, forbidding all persons from speaking of capitulation on pain of immediate death, without exception of class, rank, or condition. Both by the garrison and the people it was received with acclamations. The military Junta of the city proposed that the streets should be unpaved as a precaution against bombardment ; this was opposed by the board of police, upon the ground that it would be prejudicial to health ; the question, therefore, was referred to the medical board, who found it convenient to avoid a physical discussion, and compromised the matter by deciding that the paving should be taken up in the squares and streets through which the troops must necessarily pass.

CHAP.
XXVI.
1809.
April 1.

General Reille, who was to have commanded the besieging army, was at this time superseded by General Verdier. This army consisted of 18,000 men ; to make up that number Marshal St. Cyr was compelled to weaken the corps of observation under his own command, which was thus reduced to about 12,000 ; but from such armies as the Catalans could bring into the field, and such counsels as directed them, he well knew how little there was to apprehend. In this confidence St. Cyr would have preferred blockading the city to besieging it, and would have waited till it should be reduced by famine, whereby all the loss which the besiegers sustained might have been spared. But he was neither consulted nor listened to, holding the command at this time only till Marshal Augereau should arrive. On the 6th of May the besiegers first appeared on the heights of Casa Roca and Costarroja on the other side the Ter, and began to form their lines without opposition. A battery of eleven mortars was planted upon Casa Roca, from whence it commanded the city ; works were erected against Monjuic also ; the garrison being far too weak to impede these operations, and no efforts being

*St. Cyr
would have
reduced
the city by
blockade.*

*St. Cyr,
164.*

CHAP. made for impeding them from without. When the lines were com-
 XXVI. pleted, and every thing ready to commence the bombardment,
 1809. they sent a flag of truce requiring Alvarez to spare himself and
 May. the city the evils which must inevitably attend resistance. D.
 Mariano admitted the officer to his presence, and bade him
 tell his general, that in future the trouble of sending flags of
 truce might be spared, for he would hold no other communi-
 cation with him than at the mouth of the cannon. The French
 commander found means of conveying a letter to him afterwards,
 with the significant observation that he might probably repent
 having thus cut himself off from the only means of communi-
 cation which were allowed in war. It was on the 12th of June
 that the summons was sent, and on the night of the 13th, about
 an hour after midnight, the bombardment began. Then for the
 first time the *generale* or alarm was beat, a sound which after-
 wards became so frequent in this devoted city: roused from
 their sleep, the aged and the children repaired to cellars and
 other places of imagined security, which they who could had
 provided for this emergency, and the female company of St.
 Barbara hastened to their posts. An ill-judged sally was made
 early on the 17th against some works which were supposed to
 be the base of a battery against the Puerto de Francia: it was
 successful, but the success was of little importance and dearly
 purchased; many brave men fell, and 110 were brought back
 wounded. The bombardment continued, and among other
 buildings the military hospital was destroyed: the people, while
 it was in flames, observed that its destruction was deserved, for,
 instead of proving a place of help and healing for the sick,
 covetousness and peculation had made their profit there upon
 human misery. The hospitals of St. Domingo and St. Martin
 were also rendered uninhabitable; one other had been made
 ready, another was to be prepared, and the difficulty of providing

The bom-
 bardment
 begins.

for the sick and wounded increased at the time when their numbers were daily increasing. About the end of the month an epidemic affection of the bowels became prevalent, occasioned partly by the perpetual agitation of mind which the people endured, partly by sleeping in damp subterranean places, where the air never circulated freely, and where many had nothing but the ground to lie on. In July, a bilious fever is usually endemic in Gerona; it seized especially upon the lower classes now, and upon the refugees from those places which had been taken or burned by the enemy; and it affected the wounded also.

CHAP.
XXVI.
1809.
June.

During these operations St. Cyr, retaining the command till Augereau, who was disabled by an attack of gout at Perpignan, should arrive to supersede him, had remained in his position near Vich. The capture of the French troops near Monzon, and Blake's success at Alcañiz, had so alarmed the enemy at Zaragoza and at Madrid, that orders were dispatched for him to return towards Tarragona, and combine his movements with Suchet, who, it was deemed, would otherwise be in danger. But King Joseph's orders were respected almost as little by the French commanders as by the Spanish nation. Marshal St. Cyr represented that his army had always been left to itself, having no relation with any other corps, and being specially destined for subjugating Catalonia, which the Emperor Napoleon had thought quite sufficient employment for it, and which, in fact, would long continue to require all its efforts. On the other hand, Verdier was intreating him to approach nearer Gerona, and this he prepared to do, being aware that Blake's immediate object, after collecting the runaways from Belchite, must be to introduce supplies and reinforcements into the besieged city. His first care was to send the sick and wounded to Barcelona, the only place where they could be in safety. This done, no time was lost in breaking up from quarters which he was unwilling to

*St. Cyr
draws
nearer Ge-
rona.*

P. 368.

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XXVI.

1809.

June.

June 18.

St. Cyr,
167—172.]

Palamos
taken by the
French.

abandon; for though the want of meat and wine had been severely felt there by the troops and officers, as well as by the invalids, there had been no lack of bread; and the country through which they had to pass not being practicable for carriages of any kind, no more could be taken with them than the soldiers could carry for themselves. The movement was so luckily timed, that they reached S. Coloma de Farnes, just as a small detachment of Blake's army arrived there, escorting some 1200 cattle to Gerona: the whole convoy fell into their hands, with an abundance of wine also, the want of which is felt by the French soldiers more severely than any other privation.

St. Cyr's head-quarters were now at Caldas de Malavella, and he occupied a line extending from Oña in advance of Bruñola to S. Feliu de Guixols, of which place his troops took possession at this time, after a brave but ineffectual resistance. It was a point of considerable importance, being the port most convenient for those Spanish vessels which cut off the communication between France and Barcelona for all ships which were not under a strong escort. Palamos was of still more importance at this juncture, because from thence Gerona communicated by sea with Tarragona. This place was attacked by Italian troops under General Fontane; it was carried by assault, and the only persons who were *spared were the few who threw

* Marshal St. Cyr has the following remark upon this carnage, after observing that it proved useful as an example to other towns: *La gloire de defendre ses foyers domestiques, menacés par l'étranger, est grande, la plus grande de toutes, peut-être; mais la vertu qui y fait prétendre, ne serait point la première des vertus, si elle pouvait être pratiquée sans peril.* It must cost the heart something to reason thus even in a just war. Marshal St. Cyr tells us, indeed, that *le soldat devient naturellement cruel à la longue*: . . the more careful, therefore, should he be not to sear his feelings and his conscience by such reflections as this.

themselves into the sea, and were received prisoners when the fury of the invaders had spent itself. On the other hand, the Catalans were not always unsuccessful in their endeavours to annoy the invaders. Rovira, formerly a canon, and therefore called Doctor Colonel Rovira (one of the most able and enterprising partizans who appeared during the contest), intercepted a convoy and a train of artillery horses, to supply the loss of which St. Cyr was obliged to part with the horses belonging to his corps. And a battalion which Augereau had sent to fix up proclamations in the villages beyond the frontier, was routed by Colonel Porta before it had disposed of three of its papers. Augereau having, in the campaign of 1794, served in that province, and left a good name there, had counted upon the effect of his proclamations, not considering that he was now engaged in a cause in which every heart and every understanding, every principle and every feeling, were against him.

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June.

St. Cyr,
173, 190.

Verdier meantime prosecuted the siege, in full expectation of bringing it to a speedy conclusion. The outworks were soon rendered untenable, and the redoubts which covered the front of Monjuic were carried with a facility which made him undervalue his opponents. At the beginning of July, three batteries played upon three sides of this little fortress: that which was planted against the north front consisted of twenty four-and-twenty pounders; while the French were battering it, the angle upon which the flag was hoisted fell into the ditch; D. Mariano Montorro descended for it in the midst of the fire, brought it up in safety, and replanted it upon the wall. The breach was soon wide enough for forty men abreast. The fire of the garrison had ceased, for they perceived that the French were secured by their trenches, and powder was too precious to be used unless its effects were certain: the enemy, who had not learned the temper of the men with whom they were contending, judged from this

Assault of
Monjuic.

St. Cyr,
175.

CHAP. XXVI. silence, that their hearts or ammunition had failed, and in the night between the fourth and fifth they assaulted the breach. But it was for this that the garrison had reserved their fire, and they poured it so destructively upon the columns which approached, that the French retreated with great loss. For three days they continued their fire upon the breach. Between two and three on the morning of the 8th, 6000 men again assaulted it; and at the same time the town was * bombarded. D. Blas de Furnas, second in command at Monjuic, was in the thickest of the fight; he strained his voice till from exertion it totally failed, but still his presence and his actions encouraged all who saw him. The enemy came on, filled the fosse, and proceeded to the breach . . . “Woe to him,” says Samaniego, the historian of the siege, and himself one of the besieged, “woe to him who sets his foot upon the fosse of Monjuic!” A mortar, which lay masked among the ruins of the ravelin, and discharged 500 musket-balls at every shot, was played full upon the enemy by D. Juan Candy, and the havoc which it made was tremendous. Three times during that day the assault was repeated, with the utmost resolution on the part of the assailants, who were never thrown into confusion, though all their efforts were unavailing, and though they left 1600 of their number slain. The day, however, was disastrous to the Geronans also, though not from any evil which it was possible for strength or courage to have averted. The tower of St. Juan, which stood

* An instance of heroism worthy of record was displayed by Luciano Aucio, a drummer belonging to the artillery, who was stationed to give the alarm whenever a shell was thrown: a ball struck off his leg at the knee; but when the women came to remove him, he cried out, “No, no; my arms are left, and I can still beat the drum to give my comrades warning in time for them to save themselves!” This brave lad was the only person during the siege who recovered after an amputation of the thigh.

between the west curtain of the castle, the city, and the Calle de Pedret, was blown up. In what manner the magazine took fire was never known. Part of its little garrison were fortunately employed in active service elsewhere; the rest were buried in the ruins, from whence twenty-three persons were extricated alive amid the incessant fire which the enemy kept up upon the spot. Their preservation was in great measure owing to the exertions of D. Carlos Beramendi. The company of St. Barbara distinguished themselves that day: covered with dust and blood, under the burning heat of July, and through the incessant fire of the batteries and musketry, they carried water and wine to the soldiers, and bore back the wounded.

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1809.
July.

The severe loss which the French sustained in this second attempt convinced them, that while one stone remained upon another, Monjuic was not to be taken by assault. From this time, therefore, they continued to batter it on three sides; and, practising the surest and most destructive mode of warfare, stationed sharp-shooters in their trenches on every side, so that for one of the garrison to be seen was almost certain death. So perilous was the service become, that the centinels were changed every half hour, yet nine were killed in one day at one post, and scarcely one escaped unwounded. It became at length impossible to observe the operations of the enemy, so thick were their marksmen, and with such fatal certainty did they take their aim: no other means remained than that of sending some one into the fosse, who, lifting up his head with the most imminent hazard, took a momentary glance. By the beginning of August the besiegers had pushed their parallels to the edge of the fosse; their labour was impeded by the stony soil, which rendered it necessary to bring earth from some distance; for this, however, they had hands enough, and they had no apprehension to hurry and disturb them, that any army

CHAP. powerful enough to raise the siege could be brought against
XXVI. them.

1809.

July.

*Succours
intercepted.*

July 11.

Meantime the Spaniards were preparing for an attempt to introduce succours. For this purpose they threatened the right of the covering army, hoping to draw their attention upon that point, while 1500 men passed through the French line near Llagostera, where General Pino had his head-quarters. They succeeded perfectly in this difficult attempt, through their knowledge of the country, . . but a straggler who lagged behind fell into the enemy's hand, and upon information which was obtained from him, it was understood that they would direct their course to Castellar de la Selva, and endeavour to pass through the besieging army in the night. There was time to take measures for intercepting them, and being turned aside from thence at nightfall, when they were beginning to debouche, they fell in at daybreak with Pino, who was in pursuit, and scarcely a third escaped: the rest were made prisoners, and sent into France. It was learnt from the prisoners that the Spaniards did not intend to make any serious effort for raising the siege till the besiegers should be weakened by those diseases which the season would infallibly produce. Reports, nevertheless, were current that such an effort would be made on Santiago's day, when the patron of Spain might be expected once more to inspire or assist his faithful votaries. The French would have deemed themselves fortunate if this report had been verified; for according to the barbarous system of warfare which Buonaparte pursued, they were left to provide subsistence for themselves as they could; . . the soldiers had to cut the corn, thresh it, and grind it for themselves; and though St. Cyr had given orders that biscuit for four days' consumption should always be kept in readiness, in case it should be necessary to collect the army for the purpose of giving battle, not more than half that

quantity could ever be provided. More than once also ammunition became scarce, great part coming from Toulouse, and even from so remote a point as Strasbourg. Unhappily the Spaniards were in no condition to profit by the embarrassments of the enemy; and nothing was done by England for Catalonia, where, during the first years of the struggle, so much might have been done with effect. The army which in the preceding autumn had been ordered thither from Sicily, and detained by its general for the protection of that island, was employed at this time in an expedition against Naples, as a diversion in favour of the Austrians; and thus the means which might have saved Gerona were misdirected.

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XXVI.

1809.

*July.**St. Cyr,*
164.*Vol. i. p.*
650.

Meantime the main attacks of the besiegers were directed against the ravelin which was now the main defence of Monjuic. While it was possible to maintain it, the garrison contended who should be stationed there, as at the post of honour. It was repeatedly attacked by night, but the defenders were always ready, and always repulsed the assailants. It was now discovered that the enemy were mining; this was distinctly ascertained by the sounds which were heard in the direction of the fosse. The castle was founded upon a rock, and therefore the officers apprehended no immediate danger from operations of this nature. The purpose of the French was to destroy a breast-work which protected that gate of the castle through which was the passage to the ravelin: the breast-work was almost wholly of earth, and its explosion did no hurt, but it left the gate exposed. A battery, already prepared, began to play upon it, and the communication between the castle and the ravelin was thus rendered exceedingly difficult. A sally was made against this battery, and the guns were spiked; a priest was one of the foremost in this adventure: he received a ball in his thigh, and fell; the enemy pressed on to kill him; one of their officers, at

The ravelin
taken.

CHAP. the hazard of his own life, protected him, and in this act of humane
 XXVI. interference was slain by the Spaniards, . . a circumstance which
 1809. their journalists recorded with becoming regret. The success
 August. which had been obtained was of little avail, for the French had
 artillery in abundance: in the course of a few hours they
 mounted other pieces in place of those which had been rendered
 useless, and continued their fire upon the gate and the ravelin.
 At the same time they formed a covered way from their own
 parapet to the breach of the ravelin; by this, on the night
 between the 4th and 5th of August they poured a sufficient body
 of troops through the breach to overpower the forty men who
 were stationed there; but having won the place, they could not
 maintain it, exposed as it was to musketry from the castle. It
 was, therefore, left for the dead who covered it. About forty
 hours afterwards a few Spaniards determined to go and bring
 off the arms which the French had not had time to carry away:
 they found a lad of sixteen who had lain thus long among the
 carcasses; he was the only one of his comrades who escaped
 death or captivity, . . they brought him off, and he was sent to
 the hospital half dead with exhaustion.

*Monjuic
 abandoned.*

The guns of Monjuic had now been silenced; the enemy
 were so near, that sometimes the Spaniards knocked them down
 with stones: it was with difficulty that the governor, D. Guil-
 lherme Nasch, could restrain his men: impatient at remaining
 inactive, they earnestly solicited permission to sally out upon
 the most desperate attempts. The garrison had held out seven-
 and-thirty days since a practicable breach was made. A week
 had elapsed since the ravelin was lost, and three sides of the
 castle were now entirely in ruins; there was little water left,
 and that little, foul and unwholesome; the number of soldiers
 was every day diminished by disease as well as by the chances of
 war. Under these circumstances the governor deemed it his duty

to preserve the men who were still left, that they might assist in the defence of the city. On the evening of the 11th he abandoned the ruins, and retired into Gerona, every man taking with him two hand-grenades and as many cartridges as he could carry. Matches were left in the magazine, and the retreat was effected with only the loss of one man, who was killed by a shell when he had entered the gates.

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1809.
August.

Elated with this success, . . a success dearly purchased, and bringing no glory to the conqueror, . . Verdier assured his government that Gerona could not now hold out longer than from eight to fifteen days. He planted one battery against the bulwark of St. Pedro, and another upon Monjuic, which commanded all the works in the plain, and the whole line of the city from St. Pedro to the tower of Gironella. Other batteries, placed by St. Daniel's Tower, commanded Fort Calvary, the Castle of the Constable, and one of its advanced posts. While they were forming these, and throwing up works nearer the city than they could approach before the fall of Monjuic, a little respite was necessarily afforded to the besieged; but, that no rest might be given them, shells were thrown in from time to time by night and day. From the commencement of the siege Alvarez had felt the want of men, and had repeatedly solicited a reinforcement of 2000; even then the garrison would hardly have amounted to half its complement. Nothing but the want of men prevented him from making more frequent sallies, . . in all that were made, the desperate courage and high sense of duty which inspired the Spaniards gave them a decided advantage. "Never," said he, in his report to the government, "never have I seen the precious enthusiasm of all who are within this city abated even for a moment; and a thousand times would they have sallied out, if I had not, because of their scanty numbers, been compelled to forbid them." Just after the fall of Monjuic, D. Ramon

Verdier expects the town to fall.

CHAP. XXVI. Foxa, and D. Jose Cantera, brought him 700 men, a trifling number considering the state of Gerona, and the importance of defending it; but they were volunteers, and went with willing and prepared minds to make the sacrifice which was required of them.

1809.
August.

*A battery
planted on
the cathe-
dral.*

Alvarez now planted upon the roof of the cathedral a battery of three cannon. The little opposition which was made to this as an act of profanation was soon overcome, for the clergy felt that, as when fighting in the field they were employed in the service of the altar, so, in such a war, the temple could not be desecrated by using it as a fortress. Till now a watch had been kept upon the tower, to observe the movements of the enemy, and ring the alarm whenever an attack was about to be made. It was composed of the clergy of the cathedral, with one of the Canons at their head: now that the battery was planted there, this guard made their station a place of arms also, and annoyed the besiegers with musketry. The cathedral had been hitherto the hospital for wounded officers; it now became necessary to remove them to a safer quarter, for the enemy directed their fire thither with a perseverance that discovered how much they were annoyed from thence. In the frequent removal of the hospitals which the bombardment occasioned, the company of St. Barbara was of the most essential service; throughout the whole siege, these heroic women shrunk from no duty, however laborious, however perilous, or however painful. Three of the leaders are especially mentioned, Dona Lucia Joana de Fitzgérald, D. Mariangela Vivern, and D. Maria Custi, commanders of the three divisions of St. Narcis, St. Dorothy, and St. Eulalia.

At the end of August several breaches had been made by the batteries of Monjuic, and it was every day apprehended that they would be made practicable. Alvarez then declared in

his general orders, that if any of the defenders flinched from the breach when it was attacked, they should immediately be considered as enemies, and fired upon accordingly. The besiegers continually constructed new works, they had troops at command, artillery in abundance, and engineers of the greatest skill. The garrison was considerably reduced; the hospitals were no longer able to contain the numbers who required admission: the contagion increased, and became more virulent; the magazines were exhausted of all their provisions except wheat and a little flour, and famine began to be severely felt. Not a word of capitulation was permitted within the city, nor a thought of it entertained; but Blake was well aware that it was now absolutely necessary to make a great effort for the relief of the place, and throw in troops and supplies. This was exceedingly difficult; for, although the enemy occupied an extensive line, it might easily be contracted, and they would certainly employ their whole force to prevent the entrance of supplies into a place which they had strictly blockaded for more than three months. The only means of succeeding would be to divert their attention upon various points, and make them suppose that the Spaniards intended to give battle in the quarter directly opposite to that by which the convoy was to proceed. Blake's head-quarters were at S. Ilari when he began his movements; he ordered Don Manuel Llanden, lieutenant of the regiment of Ultonia, with as many troops as could be allotted for this service, and as many of the Somatenes as he could collect on the way, to march to the heights of Los Angeles, which are north of Gerona, dislodge the enemy from that position, where they had only a small body of infantry, and protect the convoy which was to be introduced on that side. Blake then advanced two hours' march towards the Ermita, or Chapel of Pradro, with the reserve, that he might be

CHAP.
XXVI.

1809.

August.*Distress of
the city.**Attempt to
introduce
succours.*

CHAP. ready to give assistance wherever it was wanted ; from thence
XXVI. he dispatched the colonel of the regiment of Ultonia, D. Enrique
1809. O'Donnell, with 1200 foot and a few cavalry, to attack the
August. French at Bruñolas, his object being to make them suppose
that the convoy was proceeding in that direction.

Sept. 1. O'Donnell, by the error of his guides, was led more than two hours' march out of the direct road, and thus prevented from attacking the enemy at daybreak, according to his intention. This, however, did not frustrate the plan. Bruñolas was a strong position, the enemy were posted in two bodies, and they had a redoubt with entrenchments on the top of the mountain. Stationing one part of his men at the foot of the ascent, to defeat the purpose of the enemy, which he perceived was to attack his principal column in flank, he ordered Sarsfield, with the greater part of his force, to attack the French in front ; it was done with complete success ; they were driven from their entrenchments, and reinforcements came hastening towards them, this, as Blake had designed, being supposed to be the point which it was of most importance to secure. O'Donnell having succeeded in this diversion, now descended into the plain, lest he should be turned by superior numbers. There was some difficulty in the descent, owing to its steepness and the proximity of the enemy, nevertheless it was effected in perfect order, and having reached the plain, he halted, and formed in order of battle. Another division of the Spaniards under General Loygorri joined him, and they continued in that position to occupy the attention of the French, and draw more of their troops from the side of the Ter during the whole of the day.

While O'Donnell thus successfully executed his orders on one side, D. Juan Claros acted on another in concert with the Doctor-Colonel Rovira. Rovira dislodged the enemy from the castle of Montagut, which they had fortified. Claros at the

same time attacked them on the left bank of the Ter, dislodged them from the height which they occupied on that part of the river, killed the Westphalian General Hadelin, burnt their encampments at Sarria and Montrospe, and won the battery of Casa Enroca. Llanden meantime obtained possession of the heights of Los Angeles: this opened a way for the convoy, with which Garcia Conde, at the head of 4000 foot and 500 horse, advanced from Amer, crossed the Ter, and hastened along the right bank toward Gerona. The attention of the enemy had been so well diverted by the attacks on other points, that the Spaniards were enabled to break through the force which had been left there, set fire to the tents, and effect their entrance. Six hundred men sallied at the same time from the city to the plain of Salt, partly to assist in confusing the enemy, but more for the purpose of restoring water to the only two mills within the walls. In this they failed; for, since the French had broken the water-courses, it was discovered that the weather had completed their destruction; . . . had not this detachment thus uselessly employed their time, they might have carried off the besiegers' magazines from Salt.

CHAP.
XXVI.
1809.
September.

*Garcia
Conde en-
ters with
reinforce-
ments.*

These operations, so honourable to Blake who planned, and to the officers who executed them, were performed during a day of heavy and incessant rain, which concealed their movements from the enemy. Of the troops who got into Gerona, 3000 remained there. Alvarez did not conceal from them the desperate nature of the service upon which they had entered; he addressed both officers and men, telling them, that if any one among them dreaded the thoughts of death, now was the time to leave the city, for the Geronans and their defenders had sworn to perish rather than surrender, and he asked if they were willing to swear the like? They readily took the oath. Conde, with the rest of the army and the beasts of the convoy, accom-

*Inadequacy
of this re-
lief.*

CHAP.
XXVI.

1809.

September.

plished his return as happily as his entrance. Of all Blake's actions this was the only one which was completely successful. But more might have been done, and ought to have been attempted. If he had given the French battle, a victory would have delivered Gerona; and a defeat could only have produced the dispersion of his own troops, in a country which they knew, where every man was friendly to them, and where they would presently have re-assembled. He had little to lose, and every thing to gain. Even if, instead of retreating as soon as his object of introducing supplies was effected, he had continued to threaten the enemy, without risking an action, an opportunity of attacking them at advantage must have been given him; for of the two days' biscuit which had been reserved for such an occasion, one had been consumed, and the French army could not have been kept together for want of supplies. Blake was highly and deservedly extolled for the skill with which he had conducted his operations; but the attempt, though it had succeeded in all parts, was miserably inadequate to the object. The stores, which after so much preparation and with such skilful movements had been introduced, contained only a supply for fifteen days. Hopes indeed were held out of others which were to follow, but it was impossible not to perceive that the enemy would be more vigilant hereafter, and that the introduction of a second convoy would be rendered far more difficult than that of the first. Alvarez was so well convinced of this, that he immediately reduced the rations one half, preparing at once with invincible resolution for the extremity which he knew was now to be expected; and then, it is said, that for the first time there was some desertion from the Spanish troops.

St. Cyr,
231.

Los Angeles
taken, and
the garrison
put to the
sword.

The Spaniards, after the late action, had occupied with 500 men the convent of N. Señora de los Angeles, which was situated upon the highest ground in the vicinity, and having been forti-

fied, was now an important point, as facilitating both ingress and egress for the besieged, while it remained in their hands. Mazuchelli, therefore, with the Italian troops, was ordered to take it. According to his statement the Spanish commandant Llanden fired upon the officer who summoned him; and therefore when the post was carried, after a brave resistance, every man was put to the sword except three officers, whom the Italian commander saved, and Llanden himself, who leapt from one of the church-windows, and effected his escape. The Italian soldiers had become mercilessly ferocious in the course of this war, exasperated, it is said, by the murder of some of their sick and wounded who had fallen into the hands of Rovira and other guerilla chiefs. In these dreadful cases, where cruelty excites revenge, and revenge provokes fresh cruelty, there is a fearful accumulation of guilt on all the parties who thus aggravate the evils of war: but that the inhumanity of the invaders was carried on upon a wider scale, that it was systematically encouraged and sometimes enjoined, and that it extended to women and even children, is as certain . . . as that the provocation was given by them, and the example set, . . . an example which neither the Spaniards nor Portuguese were likely to be slow in following. The enemy were less fortunate in an attack upon the irregular forces under Claros and Rovira, who with incessant activity intercepted their communication with Figueras. Verdier attacked them at S. Gregori, where they were well posted and well commanded, for these leaders were men well fitted for the sort of warfare in which they were engaged, and the French were compelled to retire with the loss of one of their generals.

The besiegers were at this time compelled for want of ammunition to suspend their efforts till a supply could be received from France. The time was not lost by the garrison in strengthening

CHAP.
XXVI.

1809.

September.*St. Cyr,*
243.*Ib.* 262.*Unsuccessful sally.*

CHAP. their works, works however which derived their main strength
 XXVI. from the unconquerable spirit of the inhabitants. When the
 1809. supplies arrived the enemy directed their fire upon the three
September. points of St. Lucia, St. Cristobal, and the Quartel de Alemanes,
 or Quarter of the Germans. This latter building rested in part
 of its foundation upon the wall itself, and the object of the
 enemy was to beat it down, that they might enter over its ruins
 as by a bridge. The fire from the cathedral, from the Sarra-
 cinas, and from the tower of Gironella, was well kept up in
 return; but the French had so greatly the advantage both in
 the number and size of their artillery, that Alvarez ordered a
 sally, in the hope of spiking their guns. That it might be the
 more unexpected, the gate of S. Pedro, which had been walled
 up since the loss of Monjuic, was re-opened, and the Spaniards
 advanced with such rapidity upon the enemy's works, that the
 attack was made almost as soon as they were seen. In many
 points it was successful, in some the Spaniards failed, and when
 they were thrown into confusion they were unable to rally. In
 some few of the persons chosen for the sally, something worse
 than want of discipline discovered itself, . . they lagged behind
 in the assault, and, without sharing the danger, fell in with their
 braver comrades on their return. So much was done, and so
 much more must have been effected, if all had behaved equally
 well, that Colonel Marshal, an Englishman in the Spanish
 service, exclaimed, "We have lost a great victory!"

*The French
 repulsed in
 a general
 assault.*

The guns which had been rendered useless were soon re-
 placed, and an incessant fire was kept up upon the three great
 breaches; on the 18th, the French engineers declared that all
 three were practicable. Monjuic had taught the enemy not to
 be too confident of success; the breaches indeed were of such
 magnitude that it seemed scarcely possible they should fail in
 storming them, but they knew that victory must be dearly pur-

chased. In the evening, therefore, they sent a white flag; it was not noticed from the town, and the officers who accompanied it made signs to the Spaniards; there was no firing at this time, and the men, both of the besieging army and the town, were looking silently and intently on, to await the issue. Alvarez at length sent a verbal order to the French officers to retire, . . they requested to be heard, and were told from the walls to retire on peril of their lives; they persisted in offering a letter, and then both the castle of the Constable and the tower of Gironella fired. As soon as the officers reached their own lines, the batteries were again opened, some upon the breaches, others throwing shells into the town. During the night this was kept up, and the enemy collected troops upon the heights of Campdura and in Monjuic, for the assault. At daybreak they were seen in motion in different parts, with the purpose, it was supposed, of calling off attention from the real points of danger. The whole forenoon was employed in preparation. Between three and four, the watch on the cathedral informed Alvarez that troops were descending from Monjuic to St. Daniel. At the same time the like intelligence arrived from the forts of the Constable and of the Capuchines; and another messenger from the cathedral followed, with tidings that the enemy were advancing in force both from Monjuic and St. Daniel against the breaches, and that many of them carried instruments for sapping.

The alarm was now rung from the cathedral, and beaten through the streets; there was scarcely any interval between the alarm and the attack, so near to the walls were the points of which the enemy were in possession: 2000 men came on straight from Monjuic, an equal number advanced between Monjuic and St. Daniel, a third body from S. Miguel; at the same time a movement of troops was seen in the woods of Palau; they advanced against the three bridges, the Puerto de Francia, and

CHAP.
XXVI.
1809.
September.

Sept. 19.

CHAP. XXVI. 1809. September. forts Calvary and Cabildo. It was not without surprise that the enemy found the Geronans prepared to receive them at all these points. Nasch, the defender of Monjuic, had his post at the Quartel de Alemanes, where one of the principal breaches was made. Colonel Marshall was at the breach of St. Lucia ; a company of crusaders, composed entirely of clergy, were stationed at the breach of St. Cristobal ; the rest of the garrison, and crusaders, and all the other townsmen, manned the walls. The company of St. Barbara were distributed among the different posts, to perform their important functions, and proclamations were made, inviting the other women of Gerona to assist them in this awful hour.

At the Quartel de Alemanes the enemy mounted the breach with the utmost resolution, and they succeeded in forcing their way into the first quadrangle of that great building ; the French batteries continued to play upon the walls and the buildings adjoining the breach, and a huge fragment fell upon those who were foremost in the assault, just at the moment when part of the Ultonia regiment was about to charge them : a few of the Spaniards were buried with them in the ruins. The Geronans then rushed on, drove back the enemy, presented themselves in the breach, and fought hand to hand with the assailants. Frequently such was the press of the conflict, and such the passion which inspired them, that impatient of the time required for reloading their muskets, the defendants caught up stones from the breach, and brained their enemies with these readier weapons. Four times the assault was repeated in the course of two hours, and at every point the enemy were beaten off. Alvarez, during the whole assault, hastened from post to post, wherever there was most need of his presence, providing every thing, directing all and encouraging all ; he had prepared cressets to light up the walls and breaches in case the enemy should persist in their

attempt after darkness closed; but they withdrew long before night set in, hastily and in disorder, leaving 800 of their best men slain. Among them was that Colonel Floresti, whom this very Mariano Alvarez had admitted into Monjuic at Barcelona, when the French took their treacherous possession of that fortress.

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p. 159.

Of the besieged forty-four fell in this glorious day, and 197 were wounded. Our brave countryman, Colonel Marshall, died of his wounds, as did D. Ricardo Maccarty, another officer of the same regiment, who was Irish either by birth or extraction. A glorious success had been gained, one that filled the conquerors with the highest and most ennobling pride; this joy it brought with it, but it brought no rest, no respite, scarcely even a prolongation of hope. There was neither wine to distribute to the soldiers after their exertions, nor even bread; a scanty mess of pulse or corn, with a little oil, or a morsel of bacon in its stead, was all that could be served out, . . . and this not from the public magazines, but given by the inhabitants, who, in the general extremity, shared their stores with the soldiers, lamenting that they had nothing better to bestow. "What matters it?" said these brave Spaniards, "the joy of having saved Gerona to-day will give us strength to go on!" A party went out to bring in any of the wounded enemies who might have been left among the dead; one had been stript by a miquelet, but upon perceiving what was the object of their search, he discovered himself to be living. "Having been wounded," he said, "he feigned death as the only chance of escaping death, for he had been led to believe that the miquelets and the peasants gave no quarter." The man who had stripped him happened to be present when he spoke; he immediately re-clothed him, ran to bring him water, and took charge of him till he could be

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*St. Cyr
resolves to
reduce the
city by fa-
mine.*

removed to the hospital. While the Spaniards were employed in this humane office, a fire was opened upon them from the enemy's works, occasioned, no doubt, by some error of the French centinels: it drove them in, and the remainder of the wounded were consequently left to perish. One wretched German, by the breach of St. Lucia, lay groaning for twenty hours before death relieved him.

The loss which they had sustained in this assault thoroughly discouraged the besiegers; and when St. Cyr, for the sake of proving to the Spaniards that he was not to be outdone by them in perseverance, would have made a second effort, the officers whom he consulted were unanimously of opinion that it ought not again to be attempted. The Marshal, however unwilling to make an acknowledgement so honourable to the people against whom he was employed, was compelled then to admit that Gerona could only be reduced by famine, and to determine upon pursuing that course, which of all others is the most wearying to the soldiers, and the most painful to a general who has not extinguished in himself all sense of humanity. Every day now added to the distress of the besieged. Their flour was exhausted; wheat they had still in store, but men are so much the slaves of habit, that it was considered as one great evil of the siege, that they had no means of grinding it; two horse-mills, which had been erected, were of such clumsy construction, that they did not perform half the needful work, and the Geronans, rather than prepare the unground corn in any way to which they had not been accustomed, submitted to the labour of grinding it between two stones, or pounding it in the shell of a bomb with a cannon-ball. For want of other animal food, mules and horses were slaughtered for the hospital and for the shambles; a list was made of all within the city, and they were taken by lot. Fuel was ex-

ceedingly scarce, yet the heaps which were placed in cressets at the corners of the principal streets, to illuminate them in case of danger, remained untouched, and not a billet was taken from them during the whole siege. The summer fever became more prevalent; the bodies of the sufferers were frequently covered with a minute eruption, which was usually a fatal symptom: fluxes also began to * prevail.

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The hope of relief was the only thing talked of in Gerona, and day and night the people, as well as the watchmen, looked eagerly on all sides for the succours of which they were so greatly in need, and which they knew Blake was preparing. That general, on the 21st of September, had assembled a convoy at Hostalrich; on the morning of the 26th a firing was heard towards Los Angeles, and a strong body of the garrison sallied out to assist the convoy. Wimpfen had the command of the advancing army. When they reached the heights of S. Pelayo, before La Bisbal, O'Donnell was sent forward, with 1000 men, to open a way through the enemy: this officer, who was generally not less successful than enterprising in his attempts, broke through the enemy, set fire to one of their encampments, and made way for 160 laden beasts, which entered safely through the Puerta del Areny. The joy of the besieged was but of short endurance; they looked to see more troops and more supplies hastening on: 10,000 men they knew had been sent upon this service, 1000 had effected their part, why could not the nine follow? After

*O'Donnell
enters the
city.*

* Two singular cases of contusion of the brain were observed at this time in the hospitals: one man did nothing but count with a loud and deliberate voice from forty to seventy, always beginning at one number and ending at the other, and this incessantly through the whole night. Another continually uttered the most extraordinary blasphemies and curses, exhausting the whole vocabulary of malediction, without any apparent emotion of anger: this case did not prove fatal, but the man was left in a state of helpless idiotcy.

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*Failure of
the attempt
to relieve it.*

*St. Cyr,
262.*

*St. Cyr
gives up the
command to
Augereau.*

gazing for hours in vain, they could no longer deceive themselves with hope; it was but too certain that the rest of the convoy had been intercepted. They then began to censure the general who had attempted to introduce it on that side, where the way was craggy, and led through such defiles, that a handful of men would be sufficient to defeat his purpose: their disappointment vented itself in exclamations against Blake, and they blamed him for remaining at the head of an army after so many repeated misfortunes as he had sustained. That general was not more censured by the Catalans than by the enemy for his conduct during the siege. The French condemned his want of promptitude and enterprise, being conscious themselves that for want of resources they must have been seriously endangered, if they had been repeatedly and vigorously attacked, or even threatened. But Blake, after the panic at Belchite, could have no confidence in his men: nor was this his only misfortune; though in other respects a good officer, he wanted that presence of mind which is the most essential requisite for a commander, and he was therefore better qualified to plan a campaign than to execute his own arrangements. When he succeeded in the former attempt for relieving Gerona, if the fair occasion had been seized the enemy might have then been compelled to raise the siege; but it was let pass for want of alacrity and hope. This second effort was miserably unsuccessful; nine parts of the convoy fell into the enemy's hand, and there was a loss of more than 3000 men, for the Italians gave no quarter. St. Cyr thought that the men who had got into the city could not possibly retreat from it, and must therefore accelerate its surrender; and believing that the business of the siege was done, he went to Perpignan for the purpose of making arrangements for the better supply of the army, and getting rid of an irksome command which his successor seemed in no haste to assume. His situation

had long been painful. The service itself was one to which no casuistry could reconcile an honourable mind; the system of preying upon the country gave a barbarous character to it, which, if the cause itself had been less odious, must have been intolerable to one bred up in those feelings and observances by which the evils of war were mitigated: and if Marshal St. Cyr had been insensible to these reflections, he had much personal mortification to endure. There was reason to suspect that the army was neglected, because he was an object of displeasure to the government which employed him; and he was made to feel that the officers under him were, for his sake, debarred from the honours and advancement which they were entitled to expect. Finding therefore that Augereau was not incapacitated by ill health from assuming the command, he communicated to him his determination of holding it no longer, and was rewarded for his services by two years of disgrace and exile.

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St. Cyr,
264, 268.

Marshal Augereau had not been many hours before Gerona when O'Donnell with his thousand men broke through the besieging army, and accomplished his retreat more daringly and not less successfully than he had effected his entrance. It was O'Donnell who first formed the Geronans into companies, and disciplined them: he had not remained in the city during the siege, because it was rightly thought he would be better able to assist it from without; and he had displayed such skill and intrepidity in intercepting a convoy at Mascara, in concert with Rovira, that the Central Junta promoted him to the rank of brigadier. When, in the unhappy attempt at relieving the city, he and his division only had entered, he took up his station between the fort of the Capuchins and of La Reynana; but Gerona stood in need of provisions, not men; a thousand troops added nothing to her useful strength, the Geronans were strong enough without them to resist an assault if another were made; with them they

O'Donnell
effects his
retreat.

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were not numerous enough to sally and raise the siege ; the continuance of O'Donnell then could only serve to hasten the fall of the city, by increasing the consumption of its scanty stores, and to weaken his own men by the privations in which they shared. It was agreed, therefore, with Alvarez that he should cut his way through the enemy ; and a few families thought it better to follow him in this perilous attempt, than remain in a city where it now became apparent that they who escaped death could not long escape captivity. The place was completely surrounded, so that to elude the enemy was impossible ; the only hope was to surprise them, and then force a way. One night, after the moon was down, they left their position in silence : the Geronan centinels at St. Francisco de Paula mistook them for an enemy, and fired : but it is not unlikely that this accident, which might so easily have frustrated the enterprise, facilitated it, by deceiving the French, who, when they heard the alarm given from the city, could never imagine that an attempt was about to be made upon their camp. To make way by the mountains, O'Donnell knew would be impossible, in the darkness, without confusion ; therefore though the enemy's posts were more numerous on the plain, he judged it safer to take that course. The plan was ably carried into effect ; his men surprised the first post, fell upon them with sword and bayonet, not firing a gun, cut them off without giving the alarm, and sparing two prisoners, made them their guides through the encampment. They passed five-and-twenty posts of the enemy, through many of which they forced their way : Souham was surprised in his quarter, and fled in his shirt, leaving behind him as much booty as the Spaniards had time to lay hands on. The alarm spread throughout the whole of the lines, but it was too late ; by daybreak the Spaniards reached S. Colona, where Milans was posted with part of Blake's army, and it was not till they were thus placed in safety that a

body of 2000 foot and 200 horse, who had been sent in pursuit of them, came up. O'Donnell was promoted to the rank of camp-marshal for this exploit.

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But an immediate change took place in the condition of the besieging army under the new commander. Their wants were immediately supplied from France, they were largely reinforced, and encouragement of every kind was given them, as if to show that the disfavour which they had experienced had been wholly intended toward Marshal St. Cyr. Augereau being thus in strength, sent General Pino against the town of Hostalrich, where magazines were collected for Blake's army, and for the relief of Gerona. The town was occupied by 2000 troops; Blake was too distant to act in support of this important post; the Spaniards, after a gallant resistance, were driven into the citadel by superior numbers; the magazines were lost, and the greater part of the town burnt.

*Magazines
at Hostal-
rich taken
by the
French.*

The French purchased their success dearly; but it cut off the last possibility of relief from Gerona. The besieged now died in such numbers, chiefly of dysentery, that the daily deaths were never less than thirty-five, and sometimes amounted to seventy. The way to the burial-place was never vacant. Augereau straitened the blockade; and, that the garrison might neither follow the example of O'Donnell, nor receive any supplies, however small, he drew his lines closer, stretched cords with bells along the interspaces, and kept watch-dogs at all the posts. The bombardment was continued, and always with greater violence during the night than the day, as if to exhaust the Geronans by depriving them of sleep. He found means also of sending letters into the city, sparing no attempts to work upon the hopes and fears of the people; he told them of his victory at Hostalrich, . . of the hopeless state of Blake's army, . . of the peace which Austria had made; . . he threatened the most signal

*Augereau
offers fa-
vourable
terms.*

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vengeance if they persisted in holding out, and he offered to grant an armistice for a month, and suffer supplies immediately to enter, provided Alvarez would capitulate at the end of that time, if the city were not relieved. There was a humanity in this offer such as no other French general had displayed during the course of the Spanish war; but Alvarez and the Geronans knew their duty too well to accept even such terms as these after the glorious resistance which they had made. With such an enemy, and in such a cause, they knew that no compromise ought to be made: they had devoted themselves for Spain, and it did not become them, for the sake of shortening their own sufferings, to let loose so large a part of the besieging army as this armistice would have left at liberty for other operations.

*Destruction
 of a French
 convoy by
 the British
 ships.*

Oct. 25.

While the people of Gerona opposed this heroic spirit of endurance to the enemy, an affair took place at sea, which, if it brought no immediate relief to the Catalans, convinced them at least that they were not wholly neglected by Great Britain. Lord Collingwood having obtained intelligence that an attempt would be made from Toulon for throwing supplies into Barcelona, sailed from Minorca about the middle of October, and took his station a few leagues off Cape St. Sebastian, on the coast of Catalonia. On the 23d the enemy's fleet came in sight, consisting of three ships of the line, two frigates, two armed store-ships, and a convoy of sixteen sail. Rear-Admiral Martin was ordered to give chase; he fell in with the ships of war off the entrance of the Rhone, but they escaped him that night, because the wind blew directly on shore. The next morning he renewed the chase, and drove two of them, one of eighty guns, the other of seventy-four, on shore, off Frontegnan, where they were set fire to by their own crews; the other ship of the line and one frigate ran on shore at the entrance of the port of Cette, where there was little probability that the former could be saved,

but they were under protection of the batteries. The second frigate had hauled her wind during the night, and got into Marseilles road.

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Two brigs, two bombards, and a ketch belonging to the convoy, were burnt by the *Pomona* while Admiral Martin was in chase. The other vessels made for the Bay of Rosas; a squadron pursued, and found them moored under the protection of the castle, Fort Trinidad, and several batteries newly erected by the French. Four of these vessels were armed; the largest was of 600 tons, carrying sixteen nine-pounders, and 110 men; she was enclosed in boarding nettings, and perfectly prepared for action. The English boats, however, boarded them all, though they were bravely defended, and though a constant fire was kept up from the forts and from the beach. Of the eleven ships, three had landed their cargoes, but all were taken or burnt; and of the whole convoy there only escaped the frigate, which put into Marseilles, and one of the store-ships, which probably succeeded in reaching Barcelona.

It was no unimportant service thus to straiten the French in that city, . . . but it was a success which brought no relief to Gerona, where the devoted inhabitants seemed now abandoned to their fate. Hitherto the few mules and horses which remained unslaughtered had been led out to feed near the walls of St. Francisco de Paula, and of the burial ground: . . . this was now prevented by the batteries of Palau and Montelivi, and by the French advanced posts; and these wretched animals, being thus deprived of their only food, gnawed the hair from each other's tails and manes before they were led to the shambles. Famine at length did the enemy's work; the stores from which the citizens had supplied the failure of the magazines were exhausted; it became necessary to set a guard over the ovens, and the food for the hospitals was sometimes seized upon the way by the

*Increased
distress of
the city.*

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November.

famishing populace. The enemy endeavoured to tempt the garrison to desert, by calling out to them to come and eat, and holding out provisions. A few were tempted; they were received with embraces, and fed in sight of the walls, . . . poor wretches, envying the firmer constancy of their comrades more than those comrades did the food, for lack of which their own vital spirits were well-nigh spent! None of that individual animosity was here displayed which characterized the street-fighting at Zaragoza, . . . the nature of the siege was not such as to call it forth; and some of those humanities appeared, which in other instances the French generals systematically outraged in Spain. The out-sentries frequently made a truce with each other, laid down their arms, and drew near enough to converse; the French soldier would then give his half-starved enemy a draught from his leathern bottle, or brandy-flask, and when they had drunk and talked together, they returned to their posts, scoffed at each other, proceeded from mockery to insult, and sometimes closed the scene with a skirmish.

*Report of
the state of
health.*

The only disgraceful circumstance which occurred during the whole siege was the desertion of ten officers in a body, two of whom were men of noble birth; they had been plotting to make the governor capitulate, and finding their intentions frustrated, went over to the enemy in open day. Except in this instance, the number of deserters was very small. Towards the end of November many of the inhabitants, having become utterly hopeless of relief, preferred the chance of death to the certainty of being made prisoners, and they ventured to pass the enemy's lines, some failing in the attempt, others being more fortunate. At this time Samaniego, who was first surgeon to the garrison, delivered in to Alvarez a report upon the state of health: as he gave it into his hands, he said something implying the melancholy nature of its contents; Alvarez replied, "this paper then, perhaps,

Nov. 29.

will inform posterity of our sufferings, if there should be none left to recount them!" He then bade Samaniego read it. It was a dreadful report. There did not remain a single building in Gerona which had not been injured by the bombardment; not a house was habitable; the people slept in cellars, and vaults, and holes amid the ruins; and it had not unfrequently happened that the wounded were killed in the hospitals. The streets were broken up; so that the rain-water and the sewers stagnated there, and the pestilential vapours which arose were rendered more noxious by the dead bodies which lay rotting amid the ruins. The siege had now endured seven months; scarcely a woman had become pregnant during that time; the very dogs, before hunger consumed them, had ceased to follow after kind; they did not even fawn upon their masters; the almost incessant thunder of artillery seemed to make them sensible of the state of the city, and the unnatural atmosphere affected them as well as humankind. It even affected vegetation. In the gardens within the walls the fruits withered, and scarcely any vegetable could be raised. Within the last three weeks above 500 of the garrison had died in the hospitals; a dysentery was raging and spreading; the sick were lying upon the ground, without beds, almost without food; and there was scarcely fuel to dress the little wheat that remained, and the few horses which were yet unconsumed. Samaniego then adverted with bitterness to the accounts which had been circulated, that abundant supplies had been thrown into the city; and he concluded by saying, "if by these sacrifices, deserving for ever to be the admiration of history, and if by consummating them with the lives of us who, by the will of Providence, have survived our comrades, the liberty of our country can be secured, happy shall we be in the bosom of eternity and in the memory of good men, and happy will our children be among their fellow-countrymen!"

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November.

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*November.**Some of the
outworks
taken by the
French.*

The breaches which had been assaulted ten weeks before were still open ; it was easier for the Geronans to defend than to repair them, and the French had suffered too much in that assault to repeat it. A fourth had now been made. The enemy, learning from the officers who had deserted that the ammunition of the place was almost expended, ventured upon bolder operations. They took possession by night of the Calle del Carmen ; from thence they commanded the bridge of S. Francisco, which was the only means of communication between the old city and that part on the opposite side of the Ter ; from thence also they battered Forts Merced and S. Francisco de Paula. During another night they got possession of Fort Calvary, which they had reduced to ruins, and of the Cabildo redoubt : this last success seems to have been owing to some misconduct, for the historian of the siege inveighs upon this occasion against the pernicious measure of intrusting boys with command, as a reward for the services of their fathers. The city redoubts fell next. The bodily strength as well as the ammunition of the Geronans was almost exhausted, and these advantages over them were gained with comparative ease. The enemy were now close to the walls, and thus cut off the forts of the Capuchins and of the Constable, the only two remaining out-works. The garrisons of both amounted only to 160 men ; they had scarcely any powder, little water, and no food. These posts were of the last importance ; it was resolved to make a sally for the sake of relieving them, and the garrison of the town gave up for this purpose their own miserable rations, contributing enough for the consumption of three days. The ration was at this time a handful of wheat daily, or sometimes, in its stead, the quarter of a small loaf, and five ounces of horse or mule's flesh, every alternate day.

*Last sally
of the gar-
rison.*

The few men who could be allotted for this service, or indeed who were equal to it, sallied in broad day through the Puerto

del Socorro, within pistol-shot of the redoubts which the enemy now possessed; they were in three bodies, two of which hastened up the hill toward the two forts, while the third remained to protect them from being attacked in the rear from the Calle del Carmen. The sally was so sudden, so utterly unlooked for by the besiegers, and so resolutely executed, that its purpose was accomplished, though not without the loss in killed and wounded of about forty men, which was nearly a third of those who were employed in it. This was the last effort of the Geronans. The deaths increased in a dreadful and daily accelerating progression; the burial-places were without the walls; it had long been a service of danger to bury the dead, for the French seeing the way to the cemetery always full, kept up a fire upon it; hands could not now be found to carry them out to the deposit-house, and from thence to the grave; and at one time 120 bodies were lying in the deposit-house, uncoffined, in sight of all who passed the walls.

The besiegers were now erecting one battery more in the Calle de la Rulla; it was close upon one of the breaches, and commanded the whole space between Forts Merced and S. Francisco de Paula. This was in the beginning of December; on the 4th Alvarez was seized with a nervous fever, occasioned undoubtedly by the hopeless state of the city. On the 8th the disorder had greatly increased, and he became delirious. The next day the Junta assembled, and one of their body was deputed to examine Samaniego and his colleague Viader, whether the governor was in a state to perform the duties of his office. They required a more specific question; and the Canon who had been deputed then said, it was feared that, in the access of delirium, the governor might give orders contrary to his own judgement, if he were in perfect sanity of mind, and contrary to the public weal, when the dreadful situation of the city was considered.

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December.

Alvarez becomes delirious.

CHAP. XXVI. The purport of such language could not be mistaken; and they replied, that, without exceeding the bounds of their profession, they could pronounce his state of health to be incompatible with the command, and his continuance in command equally incompatible with the measures necessary for his recovery.

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December.

Capitulation

Samaniego and his colleague went after this consultation to visit the governor, whom they found in such a state, that they judged it proper for him to receive the *viaticum*, thinking it most probable that, in the next access of fever, he would lose his senses and die, . . . for this was the manner in which the disorder under which he laboured usually terminated. Being thus delivered over to the priests, Alvarez, before the fit came on, resigned the command, which then devolved upon Brigadier D. Julian de Bolivar: a council was held during the night, composed of the two Juntas, military and civil; and the result was, that in the morning, D. Blas de Furnas, an officer who had greatly distinguished himself during the siege, should treat for a capitulation. The whole of the 10th was employed in adjusting the terms. They were in the highest degree honourable. The garrison were to march out with the honours of war, and be sent prisoners into France, to be exchanged as soon as possible for an equal number of French prisoners then detained in Majorca and other places. None were to be considered prisoners except those who were ranked as soldiers; the commissariat, intendants and medical staff were thus left at freedom. The French were not to be quartered upon the inhabitants; the official papers were neither to be destroyed nor removed; no person was to be injured for the part which he had taken during the siege; those who were not natives of Gerona should be at liberty to leave it, and take with them all their property; the natives also who chose to depart might do so, take with them

their moveable property, and dispose as they pleased of the rest.

While the capitulation was going on, many of the enemy's soldiers came to the walls, bringing provisions and wine, to be drawn up by strings, . . . an honourable proof of the temper with which they regarded their brave opponents. During the night the deserters who were in Gerona, with many other soldiers and peasants, attempted to escape: some succeeded, others were killed or taken in the attempt, and not a few dropped with weakness upon the way. To those who remained, the very silence of night, it is said, was a thing so unusual, that it became a cause of agitation. At daybreak it was found that the soldiers had broken the greater part of their arms, and thrown the fragments into the streets or the river. When the garrison were drawn up in sight of the French, their shrunken limbs and hollow eyes and pale and meagre countenances sufficiently manifested by what they had been subdued. The French observed, not without admiration, that in the city, as well as at Monjuic, most of the guns had been fired so often that they were rendered useless; brass itself had given way, says Samaniego, before the constancy of the Geronans.

The first act of the French officer who was appointed governor was to order all the inhabitants to deliver in their arms, on pain of death, and to establish a military commission. *Te Deum* was ordered in the cathedral; it was performed with tears, and a voice which could difficultly command its utterance. Augereau would fain have had a sermon like that which had been preached before Lasnes at Zaragoza, but not a priest could be found who would sin against his soul by following the impious example. A guard was set upon Alvarez; he amended slowly, and the physicians applied for leave for him to quit the city, and go to some place upon the sea-shore; it was replied, that Marshal

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December.

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1809.

*December.**Dec. 24.*

Augereau's orders only permitted him to allow the choice of any place on the French frontier, or in the direct road to France. He chose Figueras, and having recovered sufficiently to bear the removal, was hurried off at midnight without any previous notice, and under a strong escort. The friars, who had been all confined in the church of St. Francisco, with a cannon pointed against the door, and a match lighted, were marched off at the same time, in violation of the terms. The sick and wounded Spaniards were hastily removed to St. Daniel; they were laid upon straw, and being left without even such necessaries as they had possessed in the city, except that they were better supplied with food, many died in consequence. There was a grievous want of humanity in this; but no brutal acts of outrage and cruelty were committed, as at Zaragoza; and, when so many of the French generals rendered themselves infamous, Augereau, and the few who observed any of the old humanities of war, deserve to be distinguished from their execrable colleagues.

*Death of
Alvarez.*

The Central Junta decreed the same honours to Gerona and its heroic defenders as had been conferred in the case of Zaragoza. The rewards which Mariano Alvarez had deserved by his admirable conduct were to be given to his family, if, as there was reason to fear, he himself should not live to receive them. The sad apprehension which was thus expressed was soon verified. He died at Figueras. It was said, and believed, in Catalonia, that Buonaparte had sent orders to execute him in the Plaza at Gerona, and that the French, fearing the consequences if they should thus outrage the national feeling, put him out of the way by * poison. His death was so probable, considering what

* A man deposed that he had seen the body when it was buried hastily, by night; the face, he said, was swollen, and the eyes forced out of their sockets. Sup-

he had endured during the siege, and the condition in which it left him, that no suspicion of this kind would have prevailed, if the public execution of Santiago Sass and of Hofer, and the private catastrophe of Captain Wright and of Pichegru, had not given dreadful proof that the French government and its agents were capable of any wickedness. In the present imputation they were probably wronged, but it was brought on them by the opinion which their actions had obtained and merited.

About 600 of the garrison made their escape from Rousillon. Eroles was one; than whom no Spaniard rendered greater services to his country during the war, nor has left to posterity a more irreproachable and honourable name.

*Eroles
escapes.*

posing this testimony were true, the appearance would denote strangulation rather than poison; but that Alvarez should have been privately murdered is altogether improbable.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PROCEEDINGS IN FRANCE AND IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

1809.

*Buonaparte
divorces the
Empress
Josephine.*

THE year had thus closed in Spain as triumphantly for the invaders as it began ; and yet the French felt, and could not but feel, that the subjugation of that kingdom was more distant at this time than they had supposed it to be when they entered upon the invasion, in the wantonness of insolent power. Buonaparte, when he recapitulated the exploits of the year to his senate, intimated an intention of returning thither to complete the conquest. “ When I shall show myself beyond the Pyrenees,” said he, “ the frightened leopard will fly to the ocean to avoid shame, defeat, and death. The triumph of my arms will be the triumph of the genius of good over that of evil ; of moderation, order, and morality, over civil war, anarchy, and the evil passions.” He neither mentioned nor alluded to the battle of Talavera ; the circumstances of that well-fought field had been so completely concealed from the French nation, that they were fully persuaded the English had suffered a great defeat ; but the lesson had not been lost upon Buonaparte. That battle, and the repulse at Esling, made him for the first time feel the insecure foundation of his power ; it taught him that his armies were not invincible. His hatred for England, implacable as it was, had not prevented him from regarding with admiration the military genius of Marlborough, though he was incapable of appreciating the principles and feelings which induced that excellent commander on every occasion to mitigate by every means in his power the miseries of war. He despised the counsels, and egregiously miscalculated the resources of Great Britain ; but he was compelled in his heart

to render reluctant justice to the national spirit, which Vimeiro and Coruña, and the Douro and Talavera, had shown him could be displayed by her armies no less than by her fleets; and he could not but secretly and ominously apprehend, that such victories as those of Blenheim and Ramillies might be achieved by such soldiers. It is believed that this feeling determined him to connect himself by marriage with one of the great continental powers. Secret arrangements for this having been made with the house of Austria, he divorced the Empress Josephine at the close of the year by an act of his own government, and with her full acquiescence, reasons of state being made the plea, as they were the motives, for this measure. In the manner of the separation, in the provision which was made, and in the honours which were reserved for Josephine, due regard was shown her: she was a gentle and benevolent woman; and had Buonaparte in his moral nature been half as worthy of the throne, the world might have loved and revered the memory of both.

But triumphantly as the war with Austria had been concluded, the prospect of peace was yet far distant. The war-minister reported, that the French armies in Spain consisted of 300 battalions and 150 squadrons, and it would be sufficient, without sending any additional corps, to keep them at their full establishment: 30,000 men collected at Bayonne afforded means for accomplishing this, and for repulsing any force which the English might send to that country. In this state of things no other levy was necessary than such as would supply the contingent indispensably requisite for replacing in the battalions of the interior the drafts which were daily made from them. There remained from the conscription of the years 1806, 7, 8, 9, 10, more than 80,000 men, who, though ballotted, had not been called into actual service; it was proposed to call out 36,000, and then to declare those classes free from any future call.

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*Farther requisition
for the armies in
Spain.*

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“ By these means, sire,” said the minister, “ your armies will be maintained at their present strength, and a considerable number of your subjects will be definitively released from the conscription.” There were also at the Emperor’s disposal 25,000 men, afforded by the conscription for 1811; but upon these it was not proposed to call, unless events should disappoint his pacific intentions.

*Display of
Spanish
flags.*

Thirty thousand men stationed at Bayonne to supply the constant consumption of his army in Spain, 36,000 to be raised for replacing the drafts from the interior, and 25,000 to be taken by anticipation, before the conscription in its regular course ought to have reached them, and to be held in readiness for farther demands of blood; this was the prospect held out at the conclusion of the Austrian war; these were the sacrifices which the French were called upon to make, not for defence, not for the interests, not for the honour of France, but to support a wanton and execrable usurpation, which had no other cause than the individual ambition of Buonaparte. . . He felt how needful it was to persuade the French that a war which they knew to be so destructive was not as inglorious as it was unjust, and for this purpose a parade was made of the victories which had been obtained in Spain. The flags taken at Espinosa, Burgos, Tudela, Somosierra, and Madrid, were presented to the legislative body; a detachment of the grenadiers of the imperial guard was introduced, and seated on the right and left of Buonaparte’s statue, that the stage might be full. Rhetorical speeches were delivered, and the session concluded like a stage spectacle, with a flourish of trumpets, and cries of Long live the Emperor! In this exhibition Buonaparte addressed himself to the ruling passion of the people over whom he reigned. “ Without glory,” he said, “ there could be no happiness for a Frenchman;” and the moral feeling of the nation had been so de-

based that they believed glory might be attained in a war thus flagrantly and infamously unjust. The prevailing weakness of his own character also was betrayed in this display; no other successes were brought forward than those which had been won while he was in Spain; for though he liberally rewarded his generals in all ways, and left them also at full liberty to enrich themselves by exaction and plunder, he was jealous of any celebrity that they might attain, and desired, more from personal vanity than from political considerations, that in every success the French should look to him, and to him alone, as the author of their victories.

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While France was thus rejoicing in the triumphs of its armies, the Central Junta saw the whole extent of their danger, and rested their hopes upon the goodness of their cause and the character of the Spanish nation, with a composure which nothing could shake. Never was a nation more truly represented in its defects and in its virtues, in its strength and in its weakness. While in their administration they committed the same errors, deceiving themselves and others, which in former wars had rendered the Spaniards * the most inefficient and impracticable of all allies; their language was that of the loftiest fortitude, and their public papers breathed a spirit worthy of their station. One of the most splendid of these orations was issued during the

* Burnet says of the wars in the reign of William III. "The late king told me that in these campaigns the Spaniards were both so ignorant and so backward, so proud and yet so weak, that they would never own their feebleness or their wants to him. They pretended they had stores when they had none; and thousands when they scarce had hundreds. He had in their councils often desired that they would give him only a true state of their garrisons and magazines; but they always gave it false; so that for some campaigns all was lost, merely because they deceived him in the strength they pretended they had. At last he believed nothing they said, but sent his own officers to examine every thing." Vol. ii. p. 7.

CHAP. fearful pause after the defeat of their armies at Ocaña and at
 XXVII. Alba de Tormes, when the peace with Austria left Buonaparte
 1810. at leisure to direct his whole force against Spain. “Our
January. enemies,” said they, “exhort us to submit to the clemency of
Address of the Central Junta to the nation. the conqueror. Because in their own degraded hearts they find
 nothing but baseness when they are weak, and atrocity when
 they are strong, they imagine that the Spaniards must abandon
 all their lofty hopes. Who has told them that our virtue is of so
 low a standard? Does fortune oppose to us greater obstacles?
 we will redouble our exertions! Are our dangers augmented?
 we shall acquire the greater glory! Slaves of Buonaparte, waste
 not time in sophistries which can deceive no one; speak frankly
 and say, we will be the most wicked of men, because we believe
 ourselves the most powerful: . . . this language is consistent and
 intelligible; but do not attempt to persuade us that the aban-
 donment of our rights is wisdom, and that cowardice is prudence!
 Submit? . . . do these sophists know to what they advise the most
 high-minded nation upon earth? It would be a stain without
 example in our annals, if after such efforts, such incredible events,
 we were to fall at the feet of the crowned slave who has been sent
 to us as king. And for what? That from the midst of his ban-
 quets, his ruffian parasites, and his prostitutes, he may point out
 the churches which are to be burnt; the estates which are to be
 divided among his satellites; the virgins and matrons who are to
 be taken to his seraglio; the youths who are to be sent as the
 tribute to the Minotaur of France!

“Spaniards, think not that the Junta speak thus to excite
 you by the arts of language; what need of words, when things
 speak for themselves? Your houses are destroyed; your churches
 demolished; your fields laid waste; your families dispersed
 and wandering through the country, or hurried into the grave.
 Have we made so many sacrifices, have the flames of war con-

sumed half Spain, that we should abandon the other half to the far more deadly peace which the enemy prepares for it? For no one will beguile himself with the insidious parade of the improvements which the French hold out. The Tartar who commands them has decreed, that Spain shall have neither industry, nor commerce, nor population, nor political representation whatever: . . . to be made a waste and solitary sheep-walk for supplying French manufactures with our wools; to become a nursery of men who may be hurried away to slaughter; such is the destiny which he would impose upon the most highly favoured of all countries! Shall we then, submitting to this, submit also to the destruction of our religion; abandon the interests of heaven and the faith of our fathers to the sacrilegious mockery of these banditti; and forsake the sanctuary which, during seven centuries, and in a thousand and a thousand battles, our forefathers maintained against the Saracens? If we should do this, the victims who perished in that contest would cry to us from their graves, Ungrateful and perfidious race, shall our sacrifices be in vain, and is our blood of no estimation in your eyes? No, patriots! rest in peace, . . . and let not that bitter thought disturb the quiet of your sepulchres!

“ There is no peace, there can be none in this state of things! That Spain may be free, is the universal wish of the nation; and if that cannot be obtained, at least it may become one immense desert, one wide grave, where the accumulated remains of French and Spaniards may exhibit to future ages our glory and their shame. But fortune is not so inimical to virtue as to leave to its defenders only this melancholy termination. It is written in heaven, and the history of all ages attests the truth, that a people who decidedly love their liberty and independence must ultimately establish them, in despite of all the artifice and all the violence of tyranny. Victory, which is so often a

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CHAP. gift of fortune, is sooner or later the reward of constancy. What
 XXVII. defended the little republics of Greece from the barbarous in-
 1810. vasion of Xerxes? What reconstructed the Capitol when it was
January. almost destroyed by the Gauls? What preserved it from the
 mighty arms of Hannibal? What, in times nearer our own, pro-
 tected the Swiss from German tyranny, and gave independence
 to Holland in spite of the power of our ancestors?

“Spaniards, the Junta announces to you frankly what has hap-
 pened in the continent, because it would not have you ignorant
 for a moment of the new danger which threatens the country: they
 announce it in the confidence, that, instead of being dismayed, you
 will collect new strength, and show yourselves more worthy of the
 cause which you defend, and of the admiration of the universe:
 they announce it to you, because they know that the determina-
 tion of the Spaniards is to be free at whatever cost; and all means
 however violent, all resources however extraordinary, all funds
 however privileged, must be called out to repel the enemy. The
 ship’s treasures must be thrown overboard to lighten her in the
 tempest and save her from shipwreck. Our country is sinking;
 . . strength, riches, life, wisdom, council, . . whatever we have is
 hers. The victory is ours, if we carry on to the end of our
 enterprise the sublime enthusiasm with which it began. The
 mass with which we must resist the enemy must be composed
 of the strength of all, and the sacrifices of all; and then what
 will it import that he pours upon us anew the legions which are
 now superfluous in Germany, or the swarm of conscripts which
 he is about to drag from France? We began the contest with
 80,000 men less; he began it with 200,000 more. Let him re-
 place them if he can; let him send or bring them to this region
 of death, as destructive to the oppressors as to the oppressed!
 Adding to the experience of two campaigns the strength of
 despair and of fury, we will give to their phalanxes of banditti

the same fate which their predecessors have experienced ; and the earth, fattened with their blood, shall return to us with usury the fruits of which they have deprived us ! Let the monarchs of the North, forgetful of what they are, and of what they are capable, submit to be the slaves of this new Tamerlane ; let them purchase at such a price the tranquillity of a moment, till it comes to their turn to be devoured ! What is this to us, who are a mighty people, and resolved to perish or to triumph ? Did we ask their consent when, twenty months ago, we raised our arms against the tyrant ? Did we not enter into the contest alone ? Did we not carry it on for a campaign alone ? . . . Nothing which is necessary for our defence is wanting. Our connexion is daily drawn closer with America, to whose assistance, as timely as it was generous, the mother country is deeply indebted, and on whose zeal and loyalty a great part of our hope is founded. The alliance which we have formed with Great Britain continues and will continue ; that nation has lavished for us its blood and its treasures, and is entitled to our gratitude and that of future ages. Let, then, intrigue, or fear, prevail with weak governments and misled cabinets ; let them, if they will, conclude treaties, illusory on the part of him who grants, and disgraceful on the part of those who accept them ; let them, if they will, relinquish the common cause of civilized nations, and inhumanly abandon their allies ! The Spanish people will stand alone and erect amid the ruins of the European continent. Here has been drawn, never to be sheathed, the sword of hatred against the execrable tyrant ; here is raised, never to be beaten down, the standard of independence and of justice ! Hasten to it, all ye in Europe who will not live under the abominable yoke ; ye who will not enter into a league with iniquity ; ye who are indignant at the fatal and cowardly desertion of these deluded princes, come to us ! here the valiant shall find opportunities of acquiring true honour ; the wise and

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CHAP. the virtuous shall obtain respect; the afflicted shall have an
 XXVII. asylum. Our cause is the same; the same shall be our reward.

1810. Come! and, in despite of all the arts and all the power of this
January. inhuman despot, we will render his star dim, and form for ourselves our own destiny!"

Two things are remarkable in this paper; the total change, or rather restoration of public feeling, which must have been effected, before a Spanish government would hold up the resistance of the Dutch to Philip as a glorious example to the Spanish people; and the want of foresight and information in the Junta, who could not only rely upon the attachment of the colonies, but even venture to declare, that the hopes of the country rested in great measure upon them. But though the Spanish government deceived itself in looking for hope where none was to be found, and in its exaggerated opinion of its military strength, it was not mistaken in relying upon the national character, and that spirit of endurance which constituted its moral strength. Upon this it was, and upon the extent and nature of the Peninsula, that those persons who from the commencement looked on with unshaken confidence to the final expulsion of the invaders, founded their judgement. The Continent, notwithstanding its extent, fell under the yoke of France, because the spirit of the people was not such as to supply the want of magnanimity and of wisdom in their rulers: the Tyrolese were subdued notwithstanding their heroism, because, in so small a territory as the Tyrol, numbers, remorselessly employed, must necessarily overcome all resistance. But no force can be sufficient to conquer and keep in subjection a peninsula, containing about 170,000 square miles, and twelve millions of inhabitants, if the people carry resistance to the uttermost. Their armies may be defeated, their towns occupied, their fortresses taken, their villages burnt, .. but the country cannot be conquered while the spirit of the nation remains unsubdued.

*State of
 public opinion in
 England.*

In Spain the mountains form a chain of fastnesses running through the whole Peninsula, and connecting all its provinces with each other. In such a country, therefore, when the war ceases to be carried on by army against army, and becomes the struggle of a nation against its oppressors, pursued incessantly by night and day, the soldier, no longer acting in large bodies, loses that confidence which discipline gives him; while the peasant, on the other hand, feels the whole advantage which the love of his country, and the desire of vengeance, and the sense of duty, and the approbation of his own heart, give to the individual in a contest between man and man. The character of the Spaniards was displayed in their annals. The circumstances of their country remained the same as when Henri IV. said of it, that it was a land wherein a weak army must be beaten, and a strong one starved. They who were neither ignorant of history nor of human nature considered these things; and therefore, from the commencement of the struggle, regarded it with unabated hope.

But never since the commencement of the French revolution had the affairs of England, of Europe, and of the world, worn so dark an aspect as at this time. The defeats which the Spaniards had sustained were far more disheartening than those of the preceding winter, because they evinced that neither had the armies improved in discipline, nor the government profited by experience. It was but too plain, that, notwithstanding the show of resistance made at the Sierra Morena, the kingdoms of Andalusia were in fact open to the enemy; so supine was the Central Junta, as to make it even probable that Cadiz itself might be betrayed or surprised; and if, now that Buonaparte had no other object, he should march a great force against the English in Portugal, there were few persons who had sufficient knowledge of

CHAP.
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CHAP. the country, and of the character of the people, to look onward
XXVII. without dismay.

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*Lord Wel-
lington's
views with
regard to
Portugal.*

Lord Wellington calculated upon both. He knew that man is naturally brave, that the men of any country therefore may, with good training, be made good soldiers, and that if the Spanish troops were no longer what they had been under the Prince of Parma, the fault was not in the materials, but in the composition of their armies. The Portuguese were as proud a people as the Spaniards, and had in their history as much cause for pride; but they were not so impracticable. The removal of their court removed all those intrigues and jealousies which would otherwise have been at work; the nation felt itself at this time dependent upon England; but there was no humiliation in this; any such sentiment was precluded by old alliance, the confidence of hereditary attachment, and the consciousness that it was willing and able to do its own part in its own defence. Whatever measures the British government advanced were cordially adopted; and Lord Wellington, during the mortifying inaction to which he was reduced, had the satisfaction of knowing that the Portuguese troops were every day improving in military habits and feelings, and that he might reckon upon them in the next campaign as an efficient force. In all his views and opinions concerning the course to be pursued, Marquis Wellesley entirely agreed with him; and the Marquis, when he returned to England to take his place in administration, proposed that every effort should be made for placing Portugal in the best state of preparation. He knew that we might rely upon the Spaniards for perseverance through all reverses and under every disadvantage; but it was on the Portuguese that we must place our trust for regular and effectual co-operation.

*The King's
speech.*

When parliament assembled this was referred to in the king's

speech. "The efforts," it was said, "of Great Britain, for the protection of Portugal, had been powerfully aided by the confidence which the Prince Regent had reposed in his majesty, and by the co-operation of the local government, and of the people of that country. The expulsion of the French from that kingdom, and the glorious victory of Talavera, had contributed to check the progress of the enemy. The Spanish government had now, in the name and by the authority of Ferdinand VII., determined to assemble the general and extraordinary Cortes of the nation. This measure, his majesty trusted, would give fresh animation and vigour to the councils and the arms of Spain, and successfully direct the energies and spirit of the Spanish people to the maintenance of the legitimate monarchy, and to the ultimate deliverance of their country. The most important considerations of policy and of good faith required, that as long as this great cause could be maintained with a prospect of success, it should be supported, according to the nature and circumstances of the contest, by the strenuous and continued assistance of the power and resources of Great Britain."

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In the debates which ensued it was a melancholy thing to see how strongly the spirit of opposition manifested itself even in those persons whose opinions and feelings regarding the justice and necessity of the war were in entire sympathy with the government. Earl St. Vincent inveighed in the strongest terms against the ministers, to whose ignorance and incapacity, to whose weakness, infatuation, and stupidity, he said, all our disasters and disgrace were owing. After panegyricizing Sir John Moore as one of the ablest men who ever commanded an army, he spoke of the battle of Talavera as a victory which had been purchased with the useless expenditure of our best blood, which led to no advantage, and which had had all the consequences of defeat. "It is high time," said he, "that parliament should adopt

*Speech of
Earl St.
Vincent;*

CHAP. strong measures, or the voice of the country will resound like
 XXVII. thunder in their ears. Any body may be a minister now: they
 1810. pop in, and they pop out, like the man and woman in a peasant's
January. barometer; they rise up like tadpoles; they may be compared
 to wasps, to hornets, to locusts; they send forth their pestilential
 breath over the whole country, and nip and destroy every fair
 flower in the land. The conduct of his majesty's government
 has led to the most frightful disasters, which are nowhere ex-
 ceeded in the annals of history. The country is in that state
 which makes peace inevitable; it will be compelled to make
 peace, however disadvantageous, because it will be unable to
 maintain a war so shamefully misconducted and so disastrous in
 its consequences."

Lord Gren-
 ville;

Lord Grenville spake in a similar temper. The day must
 come, he said, when ministers would have to render an account
 to parliament of the treasures which they had wasted, and the
 lives which they had sacrificed. Their measures had uniformly
 failed, and presented nothing but an unbroken series of dis-
 graceful, irremediable failures. And yet they had the confidence,
 the unblushing confidence, to tell us of a victory! Gilded dis-
 asters were called splendid victories, and the cypress that droops
 over the tombs of our gallant defenders, whose lives have been
 uselessly sacrificed, was to be denominated blooming laurels! He
 spake of what might have been done if an army had been sent
 either to Trieste or to the north of Germany; condemned the Wal-
 cheren expedition, as the plan and execution of that miserable
 enterprise deserved, and pronounced a condemnation not less
 unqualified upon the plans which had been pursued in Spain,
 where, he said, they had persisted in expecting co-operation
 from an armed peasantry, persevering in error after the absurdity
 of such an expectation had been proved. Why too had the
 army in that country been exposed in unhealthy situations? But

the Lords had a duty to perform ; having seen what had taken place before in Spain and Portugal, they could not exculpate themselves for having continued to repose confidence in such ministers. They must exert themselves in this most imminent crisis of their country. “ You cannot be ignorant,” said he, “ of its tremendous situation, and where can you look ? To the government ! See it, my Lords, broken, distracted, incompetent, incapable of exerting any energy, or inspiring any confidence ! It is not from the government that our deliverance is to be expected ; it must be found, if it be found at all, in your own energy and in your own patriotism.” And he concluded with moving as an amendment to the address, that vigorous and effectual proceedings should be instituted, as the only atonement which could be made to an injured people !

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The language of the opposition in the House of Commons was not more temperate. “ Lord Wellington’s exploits at Talavera,” said the Honourable Mr. Ward, “ left the cause of Spain as desperate as they found it, and in their consequences resembled not victories, but defeats. For by what more disastrous consequences could defeat have been followed, than by a precipitate retreat, by the loss of 2000 men left to the mercy of the enemy upon that spot where they had just fought and conquered, but fought and conquered in vain ; that spot which, as it were in mockery to them, we had endeavoured to perpetuate in the name of the general ? By what worse could it have been followed than by the loss of all footing in Spain, the ruin of another army, and the virtual renunciation of all the objects of the war ? William III. used by his skilful generalship to render defeat harmless, . . . our generals made victory itself unavailing.”

Honourable
Mr. Ward ;

Mr. Ponsonby said it was a crisis which called upon the House of Commons to put forth its penal powers ; and that had he a choice between punishment and pardon, he should prefer

Mr. Pon-
sonby ;

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Mr. Whit-
bread;

punishment, because the circumstances of the country imperiously required some solemn example. Mr. Whitbread directed the force of his invective against Marquis Wellesley. "To Spain," he said, "he had gone, after delays which ought to be accounted for; and what were his services when he got there? Why, he went through the mummery of dancing on the French flag! He visited the Junta, went through all the routine of etiquette and politics, made a speech about reform, took his glass after dinner, and religiously toasted the Pope. On his return, of course, when the places were going, he came in for his share, and made one of the administration which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had at length compiled; but in what manner had he compiled it? His first application was to two noble lords, with whose principles he had been at war all his political life: they rejected the tender in a manner worthy of their dignity, and the rebuff which they gave would have daunted any man of less temerity than himself. There was not a man, from the Orkneys to the Land's End, who did not pronounce him and his administration weak, incapable, and insufficient. Even with the addition of the two colleagues who had deserted them they were feeble, but they then stood on a principle, or rather in opposition to a principle; but now, having been rejected by all who were worthy, the weak, and old, and infirm, were collected from the hedges and high roads, and consorted with for want of better.

"Let our relative situation with the enemy," he pursued, "be well considered! Austria gone, the French force concentrated, and Spain their only object. We are told that Portugal may be defended by 30,000 men; but would not Buonaparte know our force to a drummer? and where we had 30,000 he would have three score. Who would struggle against such fearful odds? We held our ground in that country just at the will of the French Emperor, and at his option he could drive us out of it. And

what could we expect from our present ministry, . . . or rather from a single man, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in fact, stood alone? Marquis Wellesley, of whom such account had been made, might be considered as completely insignificant. Who was he? The governor of India, . . . the man who had scarcely escaped the censure of that house for his cruel tyranny! the man who had assailed the press, that sacred palladium of the people! the friend of despotism! the foe to liberty! Could this man say to Buonaparte, in the noble indignation of insulted virtue, 'I have not done as you have!' Alas! if such a man had strength, he would indeed be a fearful acquisition to such a government; but he was known, and therefore weak and harmless. Peace," Mr. Whitbread concluded, "should be the cry of the nation. Peace, . . . particularly because the thralldom of millions of our fellow-subjects was the tenure by which this incapable junta held their offices."

Mr. Perceval replied to this speech in all its parts. "As to the situation," he said, "which he had the honour to hold in his Majesty's council, he must state, in the most explicit manner, that it was not an object of his own desire; on the contrary, if his wishes had been realized, another person would then have held the office of first lord of the treasury. When, by his Majesty's directions, he had applied to Lords Grey and Grenville, for the purpose of forming an extended administration, the first proposition which he should have made to them, if they had given him an opportunity of stating it, would have been, that it should be left to themselves to determine who should be the first lord of the treasury." This was a confession of weakness: twelve months before, Mr. Perceval was strong in the opinion of the people; but now the deplorable Walcheren expedition hung about him like a mill-stone, and, even in his own feelings, weighed him down. Having said what he could in defence of

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Mr. Perceval.

CHAP. that expedition, he rose into a higher strain, when speaking of
 XXVII. the Spaniards, and the unjust and unfeeling manner in which
 1810. their conduct had been represented. “Was it liberal,” he said,
January. “that the defenders of Zaragoza and Gerona should be said to
 have displayed no generosity, no enthusiasm, no patriotism? Well, indeed, might those persons censure what was done to aid the Spanish cause, who could assert that the cause did not deserve success! But neither in ancient nor in modern history could an example be found of a country maintaining a contest like that which this degraded Spain, and this degraded Spanish government, had so long supported. Never, in recent times, had 250,000 Frenchmen been so long in a country without subduing it. Spain was not subdued; but what effect upon the Spaniards such language as had been used that night might produce, it was impossible to predict!”

*Vote of
 thanks to
 Lord Wel-
 lington op-
 posed by the
 Earl of Suf-
 folk.*

*Earl Gros-
 venor.*

Earl Grey.

When a vote of thanks to Lord Wellington was moved in the House of Lords, it was opposed by the Earl of Suffolk, who argued that the best mode of assisting Spain was by a floating force, which might be landed wherever it could be most useful; by such a mode of warfare, he said, Gerona, during its long and glorious defence, might have been relieved. Earl Grosvenor also opposed the vote, and made some judicious remarks upon the practice of raising men to the peerage whose fortunes were not adequate to support the rank. The ends of military fame, he said, would be better promoted if different orders of military merit were established; the same spirit of valour might be excited, and all inconveniences to the constitution avoided. Earl Grey denied that the battle of Talavera was a victory; it had been trumpeted as such, he said, by ministers, but in so doing they had practised an unworthy deception. Lord Wellington had betrayed want of capacity and want of skill: the consequences had been most disastrous, nor did we yet know the

extent of the evil. One army had been compelled to retreat into Portugal, where he feared it was in a very critical situation, and where, from the unhealthiness of the position which it occupied, disease had made such an alarming progress among the troops, that he believed their numbers did not at that time exceed 9000 effective men.

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Marquis Wellesley replied, that he knew the circumstances which had influenced his brother in all his movements during the campaign, and the plain statement of those circumstances triumphantly vindicated him. "Against strange mismanagement," he said, "such unlooked for, such unaccountable casualties as had occurred during that campaign, and frustrated a plan so wisely contrived, no human prudence on Sir Arthur's part could provide. Concerning the necessity of a radical change in the government of Spain, his opinions," he continued, "were not unknown. But it surely was not to be expected that Spain could reach at once the vigour of a free government, just emerging as she was from that dreadful oppression which had broken down the faculties of her people, . . . from those inveterate habits and ancient prejudices which had so long contracted her views and retarded her improvement, and from the disconnexion and disunion between her different provinces. The change which was desired could not be the work of a day. But were we therefore to desert the Spaniards in this crisis of their fortunes, and abandon them to the mercy of their invaders? . . . As for the circumstances which attended and followed the battle of Talavera, nothing more perhaps, in a military sense, could be said of the result, than that the British troops had repulsed the attack of a French army almost double their numbers, the efforts of which had been chiefly directed against them. But was there no skill, no bravery, no perseverance displayed in the mode in which that repulse was effected? Did no glory redound from it to

Marquis
Wellesley.

CHAP. the British arms? Had it not been acknowledged, even by the
 XXVII. enemy, as the severest check they had yet sustained? That vic-
 1810. tory had saved the south of Spain from absolute destruction, had
 afforded time for Portugal to organize her army, and had enabled
 Lord Wellington to take a position where he might derive sup-
 plies from Spain, at the same time that he drew nearer to his
 own magazines. He should not attempt to diminish the disasters
 which afterwards befel the Spanish armies; both his noble bro-
 ther and himself had earnestly advised them to keep on the de-
 fensive; but, flushed with the victory of Talavera, and too san-
 guine of success, they advanced at all points, and the result had
 fatally justified the propriety of the advice which had been given
 them. This, however, was not the present subject. It was
 enough for him to have shown that Lord Wellington had ar-
 rested the progress of the French armies into the south of Spain,
 and procured a breathing time for Portugal; that country was
 placed in a greater degree of security than at any time since it
 had been menaced by France, and such essential improvements
 had been introduced into the Portuguese army, that it would
 be enabled effectually to co-operate with the British troops.
 These advantages were fairly to be ascribed to Lord Wellington;
 and he did not hesitate to say, that his brother was as justly
 entitled to every distinction which his sovereign had conferred,
 and to every honour and reward which it was in the power of
 that house to bestow, as any noble lord who for his personal
 services had obtained the same distinctions, or who sat there by
 descent from his illustrious ancestors."

Lord Gren-
 ville.

To this temperate and able speech, which showed that
 means had been taken with due foresight, and that with due
 perseverance there was a well-grounded hope of success, Lord
 Grenville replied by arguing from the misconduct of the Spanish
 ministers against our own. "Let the house," he said, "consider

how much dependence the administration had placed upon such a government as that of the Spaniards, and then ask themselves if they could be justified in supporting them in a continuance of error. We were now told that reliance was to be placed upon the co-operation of the Portuguese; but they ought to judge of the future from the past, to recollect that for want of co-operation it had been found necessary to retreat, and that the remnant of the army was in a situation not unlike that in which it was placed by its advance to Talavera."

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The vote of thanks was opposed in like manner in the House of Commons. General Tarleton said, that Lord Wellington's dispatches were vain-glorious, partial, and incorrect; that he had been deficient in information concerning the amount and situation of Soult's army; and that he had been compelled to a precipitate retreat, after abandoning his sick and wounded. Mr. Whitbread affirmed, that the battle had been more a repulse than a victory; nor could he, he said, withhold a tear, when he thought of the British blood which had been spilt in sacrifice to incapacity and folly. The consequence of the battle was, that the army had no other retreat than that through Deleitosa, and their condition during that retreat was such, that many hundred perished on the road from famine. The Spanish cause, he concluded, was now more hopeless than ever. But the motion received a powerful support from Mr. Windham, who, setting all party views aside, followed the feelings of his own generous nature. "The unproductive consequences of this victory," he said, . . . "for a victory it was, and a glorious victory, . . . were not to be put in comparison with the military renown which we had gained. Ten or fifteen years ago, it was thought on the continent that we might do something at sea, . . . that an Englishman was a sort of sea-animal; but our army was considered as no-

Feb. 1.

General
Tarleton.

Mr. Whit-
bread.

CHAP. thing. Our achievements in Egypt first entitled us to the name
 XXVII. of a military power; the battle of Maida confirmed it; and he
 1810. would not give the battles of Vimeiro, Coruña, and Talavera,
 for a whole Archipelago of sugar islands."

*Pension
 voted for
 Lord Wel-
 lington.
 Feb. 16.*

The vote was carried in both houses without a division. But the opposition tried their strength in the House of Commons upon the King's message, recommending that a pension of 2000*l.* should be settled upon Lord Wellington, and the two next heirs to his title in succession. "With the grant of the peerage," Mr. Calcraft said, "that house had nothing to do; he was sorry it had been conferred; but though there was no remedy for it, the house ought not to add to it the pension. Pensions and thanks might be voted, but they could not permanently blind the country; whatever the public opinion might be now, it would not be with ministers upon this subject a month hence, when the whole fruits of Lord Wellington's victories and campaigns would develope themselves to public view. It was mournful and alarming to hear that Lord Wellington had said he could defend Portugal with 50,000 men, provided 30,000 of them were British; for if the French were in earnest in their designs upon that country, before three months Lord Wellington and his army would be in England. Neither Portugal nor any other country could be defended by victories like that of Talavera."

*Opposed by
 Sir Francis
 Burdett.*

It was said by General Craufurd, a peerage might be an incumbrance to Lord Wellington without a pension. General Loftus also remarked, that he had always been one of the most liberal men in existence, and the state of his circumstances was therefore, he imagined, far from sufficient for the support of the dignity to which he was elevated. Sir Francis Burdett took this occasion for touching a popular note. "If Lord Welling-

ton's liberality," he said, "had brought him into difficulty or debt, who was it whom they called upon to free him from the incumbrance? . . . the people; . . . who already owed debts enough, not in consequence of any prodigality of their own, but through the impositions of their representatives. As to the military part of the question, he could only say, that the result was failure, . . . failure as complete as failure could be. But even if the occasion had been such as to deserve reward, he should object to making any appeal for that purpose to the people's purse. What was become of the patronage of the government? Where were the sinecures, which were always defended because they afforded a fund for such purposes as these? Yet application was made to the people, . . . and this by a government who, while they perpetually threw the burden upon the people, had greater means of rewarding merit at their disposal than all the combined merit of Europe could possibly exhaust."

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The same strain of argument was pursued by Mr. Whitbread. "It was often argued," he said, "that the expectation of one of those great places falling in satisfied many a claimant: if so, why should not Lord Wellington wait for one of them? It was an important part of the question, whether, supposing the peerage to have been merited, the circumstances of the new peer were such as to require the pension; for if they were not, it would be a scandalous waste of the public money. Nor was it necessarily to follow, that whenever the king was advised to grant a peerage to any officer, the House of Commons was bound to vote him a pension."

Mr. Whit-
bread.

This produced from Mr. Wellesley Pole a statement of his brother's fortune. Mr. Wilberforce then appealed to the house, whether, if Lord Wellington had devoted the great talents which confessedly belonged to him to the bar, or to any other liberal pursuit, he would not have rendered them infinitely more productive

Mr. Wil-
berforce.

CHAP. than it appeared that he had done by actively employing them in
 XXVII. the service of his country? and he protested against the unjust and
 1810. impolitic illiberality of opposing such a grant upon such grounds.

Mr. Canning. The same opinion was delivered by Mr. Canning. "The victories of Lord Wellington," he said, "had re-established our military character, and retrieved the honour of the country, which was before in abeyance. If the system of bestowing the peerage was to be entirely changed, and the House of Lords to be peopled only by the successors to hereditary honours, Lord Wellington certainly would not be found there. But he would not do that noble body the injustice of supposing that it was a mere stagnant lake of collected honours: it was to be occasionally refreshed by fresh streams. It was the prerogative of the crown to confer the honour of the peerage; it was the duty of that house to give it honour and independence. The question was, whether they would enable Lord Wellington to take his seat with the proudest peer in the other house, or whether they would send him there with the avowed intention that it was only to the crown he was to look for support. It was their duty to take care if the crown made a peer, that it should not make a generation of peers wholly dependent on its favour for their support."

*The common council
 petition
 against the
 pension.*

There was a great majority upon this question, 213 voting for the grant, 106 against it. But the current of popular opinion in the metropolis set in with the opposition at this time; for the Walcheren expedition, like a pestilential vapour, clouded the whole political horizon. The common council presented a petition against the pension: a measure so extraordinary, they said, in the present state of the country, and under all the afflicting circumstances attending our armies in Spain and Portugal under that officer's command, could not but prove highly injurious in its consequences, and no less grievous than irritating

to the nation at large. In the military conduct of Lord Wellington, the lord mayor and common council added, they did not recognise any claims to national remuneration; and they conceived it to be a high aggravation of the misconduct of his majesty's unprincipled and incapable advisers, that they had, in contempt and defiance of public opinion, recommended this grant to parliament. There was neither reason nor justice in making it, and therefore they prayed that it might not pass into a law. When the second reading was moved, Mr. Whitbread said he trusted that as this petition had been presented, the minister would not press it that day. Mr. Perceval replied he saw no necessity for any such forbearance, and the bill passed by a great majority, 106 dividing against 36.

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In these debates ministers were completely triumphant. Some of their opponents accused them of having done too much, others of having done too little, and some would fain have persuaded the people of Great Britain, that our army had obtained no victory at Talavera. The charge of having taken no measures for conciliating the Spaniards, by obtaining for them a restoration of those political rights which had been so long withheld, was abundantly disproved by the papers laid before parliament. There it appeared that Mr. Stuart, Mr. Frere, and Marquis Wellesley, had each pressed upon the existing government the necessity of convoking the Cortes. The great error which the ministry had committed, was in their neglect of Catalonia. In the commencement of the struggle this fault was not imputable to them, but to the general, who disobeyed his instructions to convey his army to that most important scene of operations: the effects of that fatal error were to a certain extent irremediable; but no subsequent attempt was made, and the French were suffered to take fortress after fortress, without an effort on our part to relieve them. Still the conduct of admini-

CHAP. stration toward Spain was far more worthy of commendation
 XXVII. than of censure; if not without error, if not always successful,
 1810. it had uniformly been brave and generous: we had every motive
 of policy for assisting the Spaniards in their struggle, but the
 assistance was given in a manner worthy of the nation which
 gave, and of the noble people who received it.

*Marquis of
 Lansdown.
 June 8.*

The result of any discussion upon this subject was anticipated by the public; they, in spite of the efforts of factious news-writers, and journalists of higher pretensions, whose want of feeling was more disgraceful even than their want of foresight, continued to feel concerning Spain like freemen and like Englishmen. Nor was Mr. Windham the only member of opposition who expressed this sentiment. When in the course of the session the Marquis of Lansdown moved for a vote of censure upon ministers for rashness and ignorance, the strong bias of party spirit did not prevent him from rendering justice, in some respects, both to his own countrymen and to Spain. "Whatever he might think of the policy which led to the battle of Talavera," he said, "or of its consequences, he should ever contemplate the action itself as a proud monument of glory to the general who commanded, and to the army who won that ever-memorable day. No success, he affirmed, could be expected in Spain under such a government, or with armies so constituted and commanded as the Spanish armies, or where supplies could not be procured; these things ought to have been known; but these things were no reflection on the Spanish national character. The Spaniards had displayed acts of the most splendid heroism which had ever been recorded; they had converted the walls of Zaragoza and Gerona into fortifications almost impregnable. Their disasters were imputable, not to the people, but to those who could suppose that a junta of persons put together in any manner composed a government, and that a crowd of men col-

lected in any way was an army. Still he was ready to confide in the Spanish people, and to believe that much might yet be done by their efforts ; and he cherished the hope, and would cherish it to the last, that if ever Europe was saved, our own country would be an important agent in that great event. But it was not by co-operating in rash expeditions with such armies as that of Cuesta."

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Lord Holland spoke to the same purport, while the intent of his speech was to fix a censure on the ministers. He condemned them for having sent out Mr. Stuart and Mr. Frere without adequate instructions, particularly with regard to the most important point, the arrangement of a system for redressing the grievances of the Spanish people and restoring their rights. But on that point the British government was fully justified. He condemned them also for neither having sent an adequate force, nor given proper instructions, nor made adequate provision for that force which they did send : but the event had shown, that a larger force had been sent than could be provided, in the inexperienced state of our own commissariat, and in the disordered state of Spain. He said that ministers ought equally to be condemned by those who disapproved of our interposing at all in the affairs of Spain, and by those who were most interested in the success of the Spaniards : if, indeed, there was any difference, the friends of Spain must condemn them most, because they were peculiarly mortified by the disappointment of their wishes, a disappointment which the misjudging policy of these ministers had produced. He was one who had felt this mortification, for no event had ever excited a livelier interest in his mind, not even the dawn of the French revolution. But having thus spoken to justify the vote of censure which he was about to give, Lord Holland argued in defence of the principle which his own party vehemently and even virulently opposed. He dwelt upon the

Lord Hol-
land.

CHAP. importance of supporting Spain to the utmost, and upon the
 XXVII. perilous facilities which Cadiz and Lisbon would afford for the
 1810. invasion of Ireland, if those ports were suffered to fall into the
 hands of the French. If, after all efforts, he said, Spain should
 ultimately be subdued, his advice was, that we should promote
 the establishment of such a system of government in the Spanish
 colonies as good statesmen could approve, the only system which
 ought to be approved in any country, a system founded upon the
 opinions and wishes of the people.

*Marquis
 Wellesley.*

Marquis Wellesley replied to the general attack which was
 made upon ministers, in a manner worthy of his reputation as
 a statesman. He pointed out the solid advantages which had
 been gained during the last campaign, by securing Portugal,
 and giving time for the Portuguese to form an army, which was
 now in a state to co-operate with the British troops; he showed
 also what advantages had been gained to the Spaniards, had the
 Junta known how to profit by them, or followed the advice which
 both he himself and Lord Wellington had pressed upon them in
 vain. Then, in a clear and masterly manner, he enforced the
 duty and necessity of supporting the cause of Spain. "Justly,"
 he said, "had it been stated by the noble Marquis, that if ever
 Europe was to be delivered, England must be the great agent in
 her deliverance; and justly he might have added, that the fairest
 opportunity for effecting that deliverance opened, when Spain
 magnanimously rose to resist the most flagrant usurpation of
 which history records an example. Not only were we called
 upon by the splendour, the glory, the majesty of the Spanish
 cause, to lend our aid; a principle of self-preservation called
 upon us also: these efforts on the part of Spain afforded us the
 best chance of providing for our own security, by keeping out
 of the hands of France the naval means of Spain, which Buona-
 parte was so eager to grasp, knowing they were the most effectual

weapons he could wield against the prosperity and the power of Great Britain. The views of Buonaparte, in his endeavours to subjugate Spain, were obvious, even to superficial observers. The old government had placed at his disposal the resources of that country, but the old government was feeble and effete; and, however subservient to his will, he knew it was an instrument which he could not pitch to the tone of his designs. He therefore resolved to seize upon the whole Peninsula, and to establish in it a government of his own. He may have been prompted to this partly by his hatred to the Bourbon race, partly by the cravings of an insatiable ambition, partly by the vain desire of spreading his dynasty over Europe, partly by mere vanity: but his main object was, that he might wield with new vigour the naval and colonial resources of Spain, to the detriment of Great Britain. This alone could suit the vastness of his designs; this alone could promise to gratify his mortal hatred of the British name. By the entire subjugation of the Peninsula, and the full possession of its resources, he knew that he should be best enabled to sap the fundamental security of these kingdoms. Therefore, how highly important was it to keep alive there a spirit of resistance to France! There were no means, however unprincipled, which Buonaparte would scruple to employ for the attainment of his ends. To him force and fraud were alike, . . force, that would stoop to all the base artifices of fraud, . . fraud, that would come armed with all the fierce violence of force. Every thing which the head of such a man could contrive, or the arm execute, would be combined and concentrated into one vast effort, and that effort would be strained for the humiliation and destruction of this country. Universal dominion is, and will continue to be, the aim of all French governments; but it is pre-eminently the object to which such a mind as Buonaparte's will aspire. England alone stands in the way of the accom-

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plishment of that design, and England he has therefore resolved to strike down and extirpate. How then were these daring projects to be met? How, but by cherishing, wherever it may be found, but particularly in the Peninsula, the spirit of resistance to the usurpations of France? If we have saved the navy of Portugal; if we have saved the Spanish ships at Ferrol; if we have enabled the Portuguese government to migrate to their colonies; if we have succeeded in yet securing the naval and colonial resources both of Portugal and Spain; how have these important objects been achieved, but by fomenting in both these kingdoms a spirit of resistance to the overwhelming ambition of Buonaparte? To this end must all our efforts be now directed. This is the only engine which now remains for us to work in opposition to Buonaparte's gigantic designs. Why then should we depart from that salutary line of policy? what is there to dissuade or discourage us from adhering to it? I can discover nothing in the aspect of Spanish affairs that wears any thing like the hue and complexion of despair. If, indeed, it had appeared that this spirit began to languish in the breast of the Spaniards, if miscarriages, disasters, and defeats had been observed to damp the ardour and break down the energies of the Spanish mind, then might it be believed that further assistance to the Spanish cause would prove unavailing. But, fortunately for this country, not only is there life still in Spain, but her patriotic heart still continues to beat high: the generous and exalted sentiment, which first prompted us to lend our aid to the cause of Spain, should therefore be still maintained in full force, and should still inspirit us to continue that aid to the last moment of her resistance. The struggle in which Spain is now engaged is not merely a Spanish struggle. In that struggle are committed the best, the very vital interests of England. With the fate of Spain the fate of England is now inseparably blended. Should

we not therefore stand by her to the last? For my part, my lords, as an adviser of the crown, I shall not cease to recommend to my sovereign to continue to assist Spain to the latest moment of her resistance. It should not dishearten us that Spain appears to be in the very crisis of her fate; we should, on the contrary, extend a more anxious care over her at a moment so critical. For in nations, and above all in Spain, how often have the apparent symptoms of dissolution been the presages of new life, and of renovated vigour? Therefore, I would cling to Spain in her last struggle; therefore, I would watch her last agonies, I would wash and heal her wounds, I would receive her parting breath, I would catch and cherish the last vital spark of her expiring patriotism. Nor let this be deemed a mere office of pious charity; nor an exaggerated representation of my feelings; nor an overcharged picture of the circumstances that call them forth. In the cause of Spain, the cause of honour and of interest is equally involved and inseparably allied. It is a cause in favour of which the finest feelings of the heart unite with the soundest dictates of the understanding."

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Full use was made of these debates by the French government, which was at this time employing every artifice for making the people believe that Great Britain was on the brink of ruin. The King's speech, as usual, was falsified, and sent abroad. There it was said, that whatever temporary and partial inconveniences might have resulted from the measures which were directed by France against our trade and revenue, the great source of our prosperity and strength, those measures had wholly failed of producing any general effect. The official French paper substituted for these words a sentence, in which the King was made to tell his parliament, they must be aware that the measures adopted by France to dry up the great sources of our

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prosperity had been to a certain degree efficient. It was said that we were not merely on the verge of national bankruptcy, but actually suffering under all the horrors of famine; that our crops of every kind had failed; we were obliged to feed our cattle with sugar and molasses, and had nothing but sugar, cocoa, and coffee, and the skin and bones of these cattle for ourselves. To a certain degree, Buonaparte and his journalists may have perhaps believed the falsehoods which they circulated; they read in our factious newspapers of decaying trade, diminished resources, and starving manufacturers; and the opposition told them, that France was certain of success in whatever she attempted on the Continent; that the cause of Spain was hopeless; that it was impossible for us to carry on the war; that if we did not grant the Roman-Catholics all that they demanded, Ireland would be lost, and the loss of Ireland would draw after it the downfall of the British empire. Speeches of this tenour were carefully translated for the use of the Emperor's subjects, and circulated throughout the Continent: but when the French saw it asserted, upon the authority of English members of parliament, that the Spaniards and Portuguese had nothing worth fighting for; that they were inimical in their hearts to England; that Buonaparte was reforming the abuses of their old government, and redressing their grievances; when they saw it affirmed in the English House of Commons, that the people of Spain must know Marquis Wellesley would, if opportunity should offer, take both Spain and Portugal as Buonaparte had done; when they saw the same persons who represented Sir John Moore as a consummate general vilify the talents of Lord Wellington, deny his merits, oppose the rewards which were so justly conferred on him, and maintain, in the face of their insulted country, that the British army had gained no

victory at Talavera; it appeared to them impossible that language, at once so false, so absurd, and so co-operative with the designs of France, could have been uttered by an English tongue; such speeches were supposed to have been invented in France, and they attributed to the artifices of their own government what were in reality the genuine effusions of perverse minds, irritable tempers, and disappointed faction.

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The Central Junta manifested none of that energy after the battle of Ocaña which they had so successfully exerted after the battle of Medinilla. The whole extent, not of the loss alone, but of the danger also, had then been fairly stated, and bravely regarded. The danger was more immediate now; so imminent indeed, that it was scarcely possible they should have deceived themselves with any expectation of averting it; but they did not venture to proclaim the whole truth, and call forth in the southern provinces a spirit like that which the Catalans displayed, and which might have made their cities and strong places emulate Naragosa and Gerona. Instead of this, they suffered a fallacious hope to be held out, that if the enemy should enter the kingdoms of the south, the passes would be occupied behind them;... the Dukes of Parag and Alburquerque would hasten to the scene of action, and another day like that of Baylen might be expected. Fuller accounts were given in the official gazette of an affair of guerrillas than of the battle of Ocaña; and details were published of their victory at Tamariz, after the army by which it was gained had been routed at Alca de Torres.

1810.
The Central Junta manifested none of that energy after the battle of Ocaña which they had so successfully exerted after the battle of Medinilla.

They obtained a few addresses thanking them for having controlled the Cortes, which, it was said, would like an elixir of

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FRENCH ENTER ANDALUSIA. DISSOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL JUNTA AND APPOINTMENT OF A REGENCY. ALBUQUERQUE'S RETREAT.

1810.

*Supineness
of the Cen-
tral Junta.*

THE Central Junta manifested none of that energy after the rout at Ocaña which they had so successfully exerted after the battle of Medellin. The whole extent, not of the loss alone, but of the danger also, had then been fairly stated, and bravely regarded. The danger was more immediate now; so imminent indeed, that it was scarcely possible they should have deceived themselves with any expectation of seeing it averted; but they did not venture to proclaim the whole truth, and call forth in the southern provinces a spirit like that which the Catalans displayed, and which might have made their cities and strong places emulate Zaragoza and Gerona. Instead of this, they suffered a fallacious hope to be held out, that if the enemy should enter the kingdoms of the south, the passes would be occupied behind them; . . . the Dukes of Parque and Albuquerque would hasten to the scene of action, and another day like that of Baylen might be expected. Fuller accounts were given in the official gazette of an affair of guerillas than of the battle of Ocaña; and details were published of their victory at Tamames, after the army by which it was gained had been routed at Alba de Tormes.

*General dis-
content.*

They obtained a few addresses thanking them for having convoked the Cortes, which, it was said, would like an elixir of

life revivify the social body to its very extremities, and congratulating them upon their triumph over internal divisions, and over those who would hastily and inopportunately have established a regency. But their enemies were more active than their friends, or rather than their dependants, for other friends they had none ; and their congratulations were as premature as their triumph was short-lived. Romana's declaration against them was not the only symptom that they had lost the confidence of the army as well as of the people. The Conde de Noroña being at this time removed from the command in Galicia, addressed a proclamation to the Galicians, telling them the country was in danger, and that for his part he had given up all dependence upon the existing government. His repeated applications for money and arms had never obtained the slightest notice, and seemed rather to have given offence. Under such circumstances it remained for them to act for themselves, and he advised them to form a separate Junta for their own kingdom, and be governed by it. A similar disposition prevailed in many of the provinces, and Spain seemed on the point of relapsing into that state from which the formation of the Central Junta had delivered it. They were saved from it only by the progress of the enemy.

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So effectually were the Junta humbled, that they requested Romana would repair to Carolina, where the wreck of Areizaga's army was collecting, and offered him full powers for whatever measures he might think necessary. But Romana was too much disgusted with the government to serve under them, and saw the consequences too clearly to place himself in a responsible situation where failure was certain. They then recalled Blake from Catalonia, where ill fortune had made him unpopular, appointing O'Donnell, in whom the soldiers and the people had great confidence, to succeed him ; but this removal could not

Romana refuses the command.

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Montijo
and D. Fr.
Palafox im-
prisoned.

be effected in time ; Castaños was not called upon, perhaps from a sense of the injustice with which he had been treated ; and Areizaga was thus left in the command, neither to the satisfaction of the troops, the people, or himself, for he had now a full consciousness of his weakness, his danger, and his incapacity.

The government for its own safety had found it necessary to imprison Montijo and D. Francisco Palafox, and they had removed the most formidable person for popular talents in the Seville Junta, by sending Padre Gil on a mission to Sicily. That Junta, however, was busily at work, though the better members took no part in its intrigues ; and the efforts which should have been made for organizing a civic and national resistance, the spirit and disposition for which were not wanting, were employed in exciting resentment against the government. This temper was not mitigated by some financial measures, which were of a nature rather to betray its weakness than show its resources. Half the plate and jewels of every family and individual was called for, as a forced loan ; and a heavy tax, in the form of a license, imposed upon every one who kept a carriage of any kind, the license being granted to those only whose profession or whose infirmities rendered it necessary. All funds which had been bequeathed or appropriated to pious purposes were for the present to be taken for war expenses, those of hospitals and public schools alone excepted ; vacant *encomiendas* and vacancies in the military orders were not to be filled up, that the revenues might be made available for the same emergency ; and a scale was formed for reducing the pay of all persons in the public service, soldiers who were actually employed alone excepted. These measures, which disappointed some in their expectations, and bore heavily upon the scanty means of others, produced more discontent than relief.

The Junta could at this time have had no reasonable hope of

preventing the French from entering Andalusia. They could have no reliance upon the remains of Areizaga's army, for the most mournful circumstances attending such battles as that of Ocaña is, that the worst men escape, and that the best and steadiest are those who fall. Parque's force was not so completely broken up; it had lost more in reputation than in actual strength, but its strength was comparatively small, and it was at a distance. What reliance they had was upon Alburquerque's corps, which consisted of only 12,000 men; . . his head-quarters were at Don Benito, having 2000 men at Truxillo, and some advanced parties upon the Tagus. But their immediate danger was not from the side of Extremadura, and what was such a corps against the armies which the French would now bring into the field! Fallacious statements were circulated to make the Andalusians rely upon the strength of the passes, and the measures which had been taken for defending them. It was affirmed that Areizaga had been joined by considerable reinforcements, and abundantly supplied with means of every kind; that his army had been re-organized; that that general, who had gained the confidence of the nation, would soon be at the head of its four divisions; and that the works in the passes were such, that all the force which Napoleon might send against them would be unable to effect their way.

Such statements, which could only deceive the people into a false security, may very possibly have been designed for that effect by some of those agents of the government, who were now looking to obtain favour with the Intruder. The members of the Junta themselves stand clearly acquitted of any such intention. One of them, and only one, had at this time his own projects in view, and they were not so much those of a traitor, as of a desperate adventurer, in the delirium of revolutionary ambition. This was the Conde de Tilly, a man equally destitute

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*Attempts to
excite a
false con-
fidence.*

*Schemes of
Count Tilly*

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of principle and of character, and who, as sometimes happens in the crooked paths of political expediency, had been promoted from the provincial to the Central Junta, because such promotion was the readiest means of removing him from a situation which he disgraced! This man, being destitute of any private worth and of all national feeling, could have no hope for his country; and finding no farther hope there for himself, he had turned his thoughts toward the colonies. His plan was to get four or five thousand troops at his disposal, and when the crisis which he foresaw should arrive, seize what money there might be in the treasury, hasten to Cadiz, take possession of the ships there, sail for Mexico, and there establish himself at the head of an independent government. The difficulties which he might find from the British squadron at his outset, or the Mexicans on his arrival, were overlooked in this frantic scheme. A few days before the battle of Ocaña he opened it to a general officer, whom he wished to engage in the project; that officer informed Castaños, who was then residing at Algeiras, and to whom those persons who saw that some change in the executive government must soon take place, were looking as one in whom the nation might confide. The adventurer was arrested in consequence, and died not long afterwards a prisoner in one of the castles at Cadiz.

*The Junta
announce
their inten-
tion to re-
move.*

At the commencement of Areizaga's unhappy operations, the Junta and the general had encouraged each other in a delusion so unreasonable that it might almost be called insane. But now if it had been possible for the government, after the experience of Somosierra, to deceive itself concerning the strength of the passes, and the reliance which might be placed upon them, their commander would have awakened them from that dream. Areizaga had lost his presumption at Ocaña, and was prepared for defeat before he was attacked. He made known his utter hopelessness to the Junta, and by sending away great part of his

stores, for the purpose of securing them, betrayed it also to the army and to the people. In their former danger, after the battle of Medellin, the Junta had declared that they would never change their place of residence till some peril or public reason rendered their removal necessary; that in such case of emergency they would make their intention known, would remove to the situation where they could with most advantage attend to the defence of the country, and would never abandon the continent of Spain while there was one spot in it which they could maintain against the invaders. It was debated now whether they should act in conformity to this declaration. The intention of such a removal had been indicated when the Isle of Leon was named as the place where the Cortes were to assemble; and there were some members who objected to an earlier removal, on the ground that it would greatly increase the general alarm. But the majority rightly perceived that the danger was close at hand, and therefore that no time was to be lost. They did not, however, venture openly to state the true and obvious motives for this resolution when they announced it to the public. The Isle of Leon, they said, was the fittest place for the Cortes to hold its sittings, because there were buildings there applicable to the purpose; from thence their decrees could be communicated to every part of the Peninsula, whatever might be the vicissitudes of war; and there they might devote themselves to their arduous functions with perfect tranquillity, which was hardly attainable amid the distractions of a great city. But this having been determined, the Junta found itself in the predicament provided for by a decree of the preceding year, wherein it had been declared, that at whatever place the representatives of the nation should be convoked, to that place the government must remove its seat. They gave notice, therefore, that on the first of February they

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*Murmurs
at Seville.*

should meet in the Isle of Leon; and they made immediate preparations for the removal.

The people of Seville could not but perceive that their city was to be abandoned to the enemy; this was obvious. What other designs the members of the Junta might have formed, every one guessed, according as he suspected or despised this unfortunate administration. Some said they were sold to the French, and the Junta were only pretending to fly, that they might deceive other provinces with a show of patriotism, and sell them as they had sold Andalusia. Others acquitted them of treason, to fix upon them the charge of speculation: a few of the members, they said, were, for their known virtue and talents, entitled to the love of their countrymen; the rest were a sordid race, who, having appropriated to themselves the free gifts which had been contributed for the use of the army, while they left the soldiers to perish for want of food and clothing, were now about to fly to England or to the Canaries, and there enjoy in safety the riches of which they had defrauded their brethren and their country. Those persons who could command the means of removal hastened to secure themselves in the sea-ports; others, whose fortunes rooted them to the spot, and who were thus compelled to share its fate, or whose bolder spirits were impatient of flight or of submission, joined in imprecations upon the government by which they believed themselves to have been sacrificed; . . . whether the cause had been guilt or imbecility, the effect to them and to the country was the same.

*Invasion of
Andalusia.*

The preparations of the French having now been completed, the Intruder put himself at the head of the French army, and advanced to take possession of the kingdoms of Andalusia. The actual command was vested in Marshal Soult, having Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani under him. The Intruder was accom-

panied by Azanza, O'Farrell, and other of his ministers, who, believing that Spain was now conquered, and that Great Britain must withdraw from a contest which it was impossible she could maintain, were confirmed in that opinion* by the speeches of the opposition in the British parliament, and by the authority of certain English newspapers. The French, to exaggerate their easy triumph, affirmed that the Spanish general, confiding in the entrenchments which he had thrown up at the entrance of the defile, in the cuts which had been made in the roads, and the mines which had been dug at the brink of the precipices, considered his position impregnable. But Areizaga had not been more censurable at Ocaña for rashness than he was now for the total want of that confidence with which he was thus reproached. Had he known how to have excited in his men either the hope or the despair of enthusiastic devotion to their country and their cause, the strength of the position would have afforded him such advantages, that the enemy must have sought some other entrance into Andalusia. There was no attempt at this; the remembrance of his former defeat acted both upon him and his soldiers, and the Sierra Morena was defended no better than the Somosierra had been. The men gave way at every point, with scarcely a show of resistance, because they saw, by the conduct of their general, that it was not expected they should stand their ground. One division took flight at Navas de Tolosa, where one of the most celebrated victories in Spanish history had been gained over the Moors. The operations began on the 20th of January, and the Intruder's head-quarters were established the next day at Baylen, a name of which the French reminded the Spaniards now with bitter exultation.

* Memoria de Azanza y O'Farrell, § 193, pp. 169, 170. They plead this in justification or excuse for themselves.

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*January.**False hopes
held out to
the people
by the Cen-
tral Junta.*

On the same day the Junta informed the people of Seville that the pass of Almaden had been forced ; but the danger, they said, was not so great as terror might perhaps represent it. The division stationed there, having been far too weak for maintaining the post, was gone to join Alburquerque, who threatened the flank of the enemy ; the Duke del Parque was advancing by rapid marches ; their junction would form an army superior to the French force at Almaden, which would thus be checked in its career, or driven back ; while Areizaga's army occupied the other passes, and was ready to hasten to the defence of Seville, whither also the two dukes would repair in case of necessity. This, they said, was the true state of things, which the government had neither exaggerated nor dissembled. They had issued orders for marching off all the men in arms who could be collected to join the armies, and for supplying them ; and they called upon the people of this capital to lay aside all terror, to suffer no confusion or tumult, but to display the same courage and calmness which they had so honourably manifested in times of greater danger. For the French, they said, depended more upon the distrust and disunion which they hoped to create than upon their own strength.

*Instructions
to Albur-
querque.*

While the Junta thus admonished the people to be calm, they themselves were bewildered by the danger which pressed upon them. The series of their instructions to Alburquerque, from the time when they first clearly saw that Andalusia was seriously threatened, exhibits their incapacity and their wavering councils in the most extraordinary manner. A month before the attack was made Alburquerque warned them that the pass of Almaden was threatened, and, explaining in what manner such a movement on the part of the enemy would threaten his own position, observed how expedient it was to call his troops from Truxillo and the advanced posts upon the Tagus. Their answer was, that if the enemy made the movement which he

apprehended, he must endeavour to prevent them, by taking a good position, where he might fight them to advantage ; meantime the force at Truxillo must not be lessened, and he must not forget to leave a competent garrison in Badajoz. By another dispatch they enjoined him to act offensively and with energy, to destroy the plans of the French for penetrating by the road of La Plata. Another ordered him to hold himself ready for marching as soon as he should receive instructions ; and had he been a man of less decision, it would thus have suspended his movements till those instructions arrived. His army was thus upon the Guadiana when the passes were forced, and the enemy moved a column along the road of La Plata, to occupy Guadalcanal, and thus prevent him from entering Andalusia. This purpose Alburquerque understood, and made his own movements so judiciously, that when they expected to take easy possession of Guadalcanal, they found him there with the main body of his infantry, while the horse escorted his artillery to St. Olalla and Ronquillo ; and thus the whole army was ready to move wherever its services were required. Here he received those instructions for which he had been too zealous and too good an officer to wait. They directed him to approach the enemy as near as possible, to oppose them if they attempted to enter Andalusia, and if they should retreat upon La Mancha, to harass them as much as possible ; for it appears that the Junta even indulged this hope. Alburquerque informed them, that an army, consisting of 8000 disposable men and 600 horse, could not approach very near to watch the movements of a hostile force, more than three-fold its own number ; if he added to his own little division that which was destined to garrison Badajoz, which had at this time scarcely 400 effective men, it would only increase his own troops to 11,700, which would still be insufficient either to occupy the line of defence, which they instructed him to take up, or to

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*Manifesto
del Duque
de Albur-
querque,
45-70.*

*Insurrec-
tion at Se-
ville against
the Central
Junta.*

observe the enemy with any hope of impeding them: nevertheless he would do all that was possible. On the 21st the Junta ordered him to march immediately for Cordoba, in consequence of the enemy's having occupied the pass called Puerto del Rey; the next morning they summoned him to Seville, by the shortest route, and with the utmost expedition; before night they changed their purpose, and sent off another express, ordering him to Cordoba. This vacillation was imputed to treason, especially as the war-minister, D. Antonio Cornel, had long been suspected by the people. Certain it is, that if Alburquerque had obeyed these orders, his own army must have been cut off, and Cadiz would inevitably have been taken by the enemy, according to their aim and expectation: but the error of the Junta is sufficiently accounted for by their incapacity and their alarm.

The termination of their power was at hand. When this last order was expedited to Alburquerque, every hour brought fresh tidings of the progress of the enemy, the murmurs of the people becoming louder as their agitation increased, and their danger appeared more imminent. The Junta were hastening their departure for Cadiz; their equipages were conveyed to the quays, and the papers from the public offices were embarked on the Guadalquivir. This alone would have made the populace apprehend the real state of things, even if it had been possible to keep them in ignorance of the disasters which so many breathless couriers announced. During the nights of the 22d and 23d the patrols were doubled; no disturbance, however, took place; the agents of Montijo and Francisco Palafox were preparing to strike an effectual blow, and carefully prevented a premature explosion. On the morning of the 24th the people assembled in the square of St. Francisco, and in front of the Alcazar; some demanded that the Central Junta should be deposed; others,

more violent in their rage, cried out, that they should be put to death; but the universal cry was, that the city should be defended: and they took arms tumultuously, forbade all persons to leave the city, and patrolled the streets in numerous small parties to see that this prohibition was observed. The tumult began at eight in the morning, and in the course of two hours became general: they who secretly directed it, cried out that the Junta of Seville should assume the government, went to the Carthusian convent in which Montijo and Francisco Palafox were confined, delivered them, and by acclamation called on Saavedra to take upon himself the direction of public affairs in this emergency.

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D. Francisco Saavedra, at that time minister of finance and president of the Junta of Seville, was a man of great ability and high character; but he was advanced in years, and it was believed that poison had been administered him, at the instigation of Godoy, which had in some degree affected his intellects. Whatever foundation there may have been for this belief, he betrayed no want either of intellect or of exertion on this occasion; he calmed the people by consenting to exercise the authority with which they invested him; assembled the members of the provincial Junta; issued a proclamation enjoining the Sevillians to remain tranquil; and by making new appointments, and dispatching new orders to the armies, satisfied the populace for the time. Montijo left the city to assist in collecting the scattered troops; and Romana was re-nominated to that army from which the Central Junta had removed him. The people, however, called upon Romana to take upon himself the defence of the city, and stopped his horses at the gate; but Romana evaded the multitude, and hastened towards Badajoz to secure that important fortress, as the best service which he could then perform.

*Saavedra
takes upon
himself the
temporary
authority.*

Every thing was in confusion now. The Central Junta were

*The French
enter Se-
ville.*

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Jovellanos,
p. 13. § 6.

They over-
ran Anda-
lusia.

hastening how they could to Cadiz. Saavedra with five other members of the Seville Junta took the same course, separating themselves from their unworthy colleagues, some of whom, they now perceived, were corrupted by the enemy, and others betrayed by their selfishness and their fears. These persons remained to receive their reward from the intrusive government, or make their terms with it; and Seville, in spite of the disposition of its inhabitants, received the yoke like Madrid. This had been foreseen, and the Central Junta had been urged to break up the cannon foundry, and destroy the stores which they could not remove; but every thing was left to the French. The virtue indeed which had been displayed at Zaragoza and Gerona appeared the more remarkable when it was seen how ignobly the Andalusian cities submitted to the invaders, who sent off their detachments in all directions, not so much to conquer the country, as to take possession of it. Jaen, which had boasted of its preparations for defence, where six-and-forty pieces of cannon had been mounted, and military stores laid in to resist a siege, submitted as tamely as the most defenceless village. Granada, also, where a crusade had been preached, was entered without resistance by Sebastiani. The people of Alhama were the first who opposed the enemy; their town, which had only the ruins of Moorish works to protect it, was carried by storm; and Sebastiani fought his way from Antequera to Malaga through armed citizens and peasantry, headed by priests and monks. The French say that this insurrection, as they called it, put on an alarming appearance; and it is evident, from the struggle made in this quarter by a hasty and undisciplined multitude, that if the provincial authorities had displayed common prudence in preparing for the invasion, and common spirit in resisting it, Andalusia might have proved the grave of the invaders. While Sebastiani thus overran Granada, Mortier was detached on the

other hand to occupy Extremadura, which it was thought was left exposed by the retreat of the English; but Alburquerque, disobeying the express commands of the government, had garrisoned Badajoz, Romana had repaired in time to that fortress, and the designs and expectations of the enemy in that important quarter were effectually baffled.

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This was not their only disappointment. The possession of the country, and all the open towns, was of little importance when compared with that of Cadiz. If it were possible that the fate of Spain could depend upon any single event, that event would have been the capture of Cadiz at this time; and the French therefore pushed on for it with even more than their accustomed rapidity. The city was utterly unprepared for an attack: there were not a thousand troops in the Isle of Leon, and not volunteers enough to man the works; the battery of St. Fernando, one of its main bulwarks of defence, was unfinished. While the scene of action was at a distance, the people of Cadiz thought the danger was remote also; and but for the genius and decision of a single man, Buonaparte might have executed his threat of taking vengeance there for the loss of his squadron.

*The French
push for
Cadiz.*

At four on the morning of the 24th Alburquerque received that dispatch from the Central Junta, which, countermanding his march to Seville, ordered him to make for Cordoba. A counter-order of some kind he seems to have expected; for, in acknowledging this dispatch, he expressed his satisfaction that he had not commenced his movements according to the instructions received the preceding night, in which case he must have had the inconvenience of a counter-march; at the same time he said, that the troops which he had directed to garrison Badajoz, and which he was now ordered to recall, could not join him without great danger, and without leaving that place defenceless; . . . a point of such importance, that though these orders

*Albur-
querque's
movements.*

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XXVIII. At this time he was at Pedroso de la Sierra, whither he had ad-
1810. vanced from Guadalcanal, pursuant to the first instructions, re-
January. quiring him to move upon Cordoba. There was the Guadal-
quivir to cross, and Alburquerque, not being certain that his
artillery could pass the bridge of Triana, determined to have it
ferried over at Cantillana. He was near that ferry when the
last dispatches reached him, written on the 23d, and repeating
the order to march towards Cordoba: but Alburquerque at this
time knew that the Junta were flying from Seville, though they
had given him no intimation of their design, and knew also that
Cordoba must then be in the enemy's possession. He did not
therefore hesitate for a moment to disobey orders, which must
have led to the destruction of his army, . . . an army, in the fate
of which, inconsiderable as it was, the fate of Spain was more
essentially involved, than in that of any which she had yet sent
into the field. Having crossed at Cantillana, he made the main
body proceed to Carmona, while he himself, with part of his
little cavalry, advanced towards Ecija, where the French had
already arrived, to ascertain their movements, and if possible
alarm them by his own, and make them suppose that his army
covered Seville: but the French general, as well as Alburquerque,
was aware that Seville was a point of far inferior importance to
that upon which the invaders had fixed their attention; and the
enemy were now pushing on the chief part of their force by El
Arahal and Moron to Utrera, in order to cut off the Duke from
Cadiz. The least delay or indecision, from the moment he
began his march, would have proved fatal. Instantly perceiving
their object, he ordered his troops to make for Utrera, where his
artillery and cavalry arrived almost at the same time with the
French; from thence he marched with the infantry by Las Ca-
bezas to Lebrija, across the marsh, at a season when it was

deemed impracticable ; thus enabling it to reach Xerez in time, while the cavalry accompanied the artillery along the high road, skirmishing as it retreated, delaying the pursuers, and sacrificing itself for the preservation of the rest of the army and of Cadiz. On the night of the 30th he performed this march from Utrera to Lebrija ; and on the same night the people of Cadiz were relieved by an express from him, saying, that he was between them and the French, and should reach the city in time to save it. The following morning he arrived at Xerez, having gained a day's march upon the enemy : they found themselves outstript in rapidity, and outmanœuvred ; and on the morning of the 2d of February, Alburquerque, with his 8000 men, entered the Isle of Leon, having accomplished a march of sixty-five leagues, 260 English miles. Thus Cadiz was saved.

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*Cadiz saved
by Albur-
querque.*

Yet the means of defence had been so scandalously neglected, that the Isle of Leon must have been lost if the French had ventured to make a spirited attack upon it ; and Cadiz would then speedily have shared the same fate. In general, the French calculate with sufficient confidence upon the errors of their enemies, . . a confidence which has rarely deceived them in the field, and has almost invariably succeeded in negotiation. Here, however, they did not think it possible that works so essential to the salvation of the government should have been left unfinished ; and, knowing that the troops were under a man whom they trusted and loved, they knew that, naked, and exhausted, and half-starved as those troops were, behind walls and ramparts they would prove desperate opponents. Having saved this all-important place by his presence, the Duke lost no time in securing it ; he exerted himself night and day : the people, he says, when they are guided by their first feelings, usually see things as they are ; they blessed him as their preserver, and he was appointed governor by acclamation.

*He is ap-
pointed go-
vernor of
Cadiz by
the people.*

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*January.**A Junta
elected at
Cadiz.*

While Alburquerque was on his march, a change in the government had been effected. Venegas had been appointed governor of Cadiz by the Central Junta, apparently in reward for that blind obedience to their instructions, which, more than any other circumstance, frustrated Sir Arthur Wellesley's victory. Both Mr. Frere and the British general distrusted his military talents. The people of Cadiz, with less justice, suspected his fidelity, and he was not without fear that he might become the victim of suspicion in some fit of popular fury. His danger became greater as soon as it was known that the Central Junta had been deposed at Seville, and were flying in various directions; but Venegas, with prudent foresight, went to the Cabildo, and, saying that the government from which he had received his appointment existed no longer, resigned his command into their hands, and offered to perform any duty to which they should appoint him. This well-timed submission had all the effect which he could wish; the Cabildo were flattered by it, the more, because such deference of the military to the civil authority was altogether unprecedented in that country; and they requested him to continue in his post, and act as their president, till a Junta could be elected for the government of the town. Measures were immediately taken for choosing this Junta, and the election was made in the fairest manner. A balloting-box was carried from house to house; the head of every family voted for an electoral body; and this body, consisting of about threescore persons, then elected the Junta, who were eighteen in number. A mode of election so perfectly free and unobjectionable gave to the Junta of Cadiz a proportionate influence over the people; but they themselves, proud of being, as they imagined, the only legally-constituted body in Spain, became immediately jealous of their power, and hostile to the establishment of any other.

It was, however, essential to the salvation of the country that some government should be established, which would be recognized by the whole of Spain. The members of the Central Junta, who had arrived in the Isle of Leon, would fain have continued their functions; they found it vain to attempt this, and then, yielding to necessity, they suffered themselves to be guided by Jovellanos, who represented to them the necessity of appointing a regency, not including any individual of their own body. Mr. Frere, acting as British minister till Marquis Wellesley's successor should arrive, exerted that influence which he so deservedly possessed, first to enforce the advice of Jovellanos upon his colleagues, and afterwards to make the Junta of Cadiz assent to the only measure which could preserve their country from anarchy; but so little were they disposed to acknowledge any authority except their own, that, unless the whole influence of the British minister had been zealously exerted, their acquiescence would not have been obtained. The Archbishop of Laodicea, who was president of the Central Junta, the Conde de Altamira, Valdes, and Ovalle, had been seized at Xerez, and were in imminent danger from the blind fury of the populace, if some resolute men had not come forward and saved them, by persuading the mob to put them under custody in the Carthusian convent, as prisoners of state. They were indebted for their liberation to Castaños, who in this time of danger had hastened to the Isle of Leon, and took measures for having them safely conducted thither. Their arrival made the number of members three-and-twenty; and on the 29th of January this government issued its last decree. Voluntarily they cannot be said to have laid down their power, but the same presiding mind which pervaded their former writings made them resign it with dignity. "Having," they said, "re-assembled in the Isle of Leon, pursuant to their decree of the 13th, the dangers of the state were

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*Resignation
of the Cen-
tral Junta.*

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greatly augmented, although less by the progress of the enemy than by internal convulsions. The change of government which they themselves had announced, but had reserved for the Cortes to effect, could no longer be deferred without mortal danger to the country. But that change must not be the act of a single body, a single place, or a single individual; for in such case, that which ought to be the work of prudence and of the law, would be the work of agitation and tumult; and a faction would do that, which ought only to be done by the whole nation, or by a body lawfully representing it. The fatal consequences which must result from such disorder were apparent; there was no wise citizen who did not perceive, no Frenchman who did not wish for them. If the urgency of present calamities, and the public opinion which was governed by them, required the immediate establishment of a Council of Regency, the appointment of that council belonged to none but the supreme authority, established by the national will, obeyed by it, and acknowledged by the provinces, the armies, the allies, and the colonies of Spain; . . the sole legitimate authority, which represented the unity of the power of the monarchy."

*A regency
appointed.*

After this preamble they nominated as regents Don Pedro de Quevedo y Quintana, Bishop of Orense; D. Francisco de Saavedra, late president of the Junta of Seville; General Castaños; Don Antonio de Escaño, minister of marine; and D. Esteban Fernandez de Leon, a member of the council of the Indies, as representative of the colonies. To these persons the Junta transferred its authority; providing, however, that they should only retain it till the Cortes were assembled, who were then to determine what form of government should be adopted; and that the means which were thus provided for the ultimate welfare of the nation might not be defeated, they required that the regents, when they took their oath to the Junta, should swear also that they would

verify the meeting of the Cortes at the time which had been appointed. The new government was to be installed on the third day after this decree. The Junta accompanied it with a farewell address to the people, condemning the tumult at Seville, and justifying themselves, like men who felt that they had been unjustly accused, because they had been unfortunate. Neither their incessant application to the public weal, they said, had been sufficient to accomplish what they desired, nor the disinterestedness with which they had served their country, nor their loyalty to their beloved but unhappy king, nor their hatred to the tyrant and to every kind of tyranny. Ambition, and intrigue, and ignorance had been too powerful. "Ought we," they said, "to have let the public revenues be plundered, which base interest and selfishness were seeking to drain off by a thousand ways? Could we satisfy the ambition of those who did not think themselves sufficiently rewarded with three or four steps of promotion in as many months? or, could we, notwithstanding the moderation which has been the character of our government, forbear to correct with the authority of the law, the faults occasioned by that spirit of faction, which was audaciously proceeding to destroy order, introduce anarchy, and miserably overthrow the state?"

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*Last address
of the Cen-
tral Junta.*

Then drawing a rapid sketch of the exertions which they had made since they were driven from Aranjuez, . . . "Events," they said, "have been unsuccessful, . . . but was the fate of battles in our hands? And when these reverses are remembered, why should it be forgotten that we have maintained our intimate relations with the friendly powers; that we have drawn closer the bonds of fraternity with our Americas; and that we have resisted with dignity the perfidious overtures of the usurper? But nothing could restrain the hatred which, from the hour of its installation, was sworn against the Junta. Its orders were always ill inter-

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preted, and never well obeyed." Then, touching upon the insults and dangers to which they had been exposed in the insurrection at Seville, . . . "Spaniards," they continued, "thus it is that those men have been persecuted and defamed, whom you chose for your representatives; they who without guards, without troops, without punishments, confiding themselves to the public faith, exercised tranquilly, under its protection, those august functions with which you had invested them! And who are they, mighty God! who persecute them? the same who, from its installation, have laboured to destroy the Junta from its foundations; the same who have introduced disorder into the cities, division into the armies, insubordination into the constituted authorities. The individuals of the government are neither perfect nor impeccable; they are men, and as such liable to human weakness and error. But as public administrators, as your representatives, they will reply to the imputations of these agitators, and show them where good faith and patriotism have been found, and where ambitious passions, which incessantly have destroyed the bowels of the country. Reduced from henceforward by our own choice to the rank of simple citizens, without any other reward than the remembrance of the zeal and of the labours which we have employed in the public service, we are ready, or, more truly, we are anxious, to reply to our calumniators before the Cortes, or the tribunal which it shall appoint. Let them fear, not us; let them fear, who have seduced the simple, corrupted the vile, and agitated the furious; let them fear, who, in the moment of the greatest danger, when the edifice of the state could scarce resist the shock from without, have applied to it the torch of dissension, to reduce it to ashes. Remember, Spaniards, the fate of Porto! an internal tumult, excited by the French themselves, opened its gates to Soult, who did not advance to occupy it till a popular tumult had rendered

its defence impossible. The Junta warned you against a similar fate after the battle of Medellin, when symptoms appeared of that discord which has now with such hazard declared itself. Recover yourselves, and do not accomplish these mournful pre- sentiments!

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“ Strong, however, as we are in the testimony of our own consciences, and secure in that we have done for the good of the state as much as circumstances placed within our power, the country and our own honour demand from us the last proof of our zeal, and require us to lay down an authority, the continuance of which might draw on new disturbances and dissensions. Yes, Spaniards, your government, which, from the hour of its installation, has omitted nothing which it believed could accomplish the public wish; which, as a faithful steward, has given to all the resources that have reached its hands no other destination than the sacred wants of the country; which has frankly published its proceedings; and which has evinced the greatest proof of its desire for your welfare, by convoking a Cortes more numerous and free than any which the monarchy has ever yet witnessed, resigns willingly the power and authority which you have confided to it, and transfers them to the Council of Regency, which it has established by the decree of this day. May your new governors be more fortunate in their proceedings! and the individuals of the supreme Junta will envy them nothing but the glory of having saved their country, and delivered their King.”

Thus terminated the unfortunate but ever-memorable administration of the Central Junta, a body which had become as odious before its dissolution, as it was popular when it was first installed. If in their conduct there had been much to condemn and much to regret, it may be admitted, upon a calm retrospect, that there was hardly less to be applauded and admired. Spain

CHAP. will hereafter render justice to their intentions, and remember
XXVIII. with gratitude that this was the first government which addressed
1810. the Spaniards as a free people, the first to sanction those constitutional principles of liberty which had for so many generations been suppressed. It was to be expected, when such tremendous events were passing, and such momentous interests at stake, that their errors would be judged of by their consequences without reference to their causes. An unsuccessful administration is always unpopular; and in perilous and suspicious times, when the affairs of state go ill, what is the effect of misjudgement, or weakness, or inevitable circumstances, is too commonly and too readily imputed to deliberate treason. Such an opinion had very generally prevailed against the Central Junta; but when this power was at an end, and nothing would have gratified the people more than the exposure and punishment of the guilty, not even the shadow of proof could be found against them. They were inexperienced in business, they had been trained up in prejudice, they partook, as was to be expected, of the defects of the national character; but they partook, and some of them in the highest degree, of its virtues also: and their generous feeling, their high-mindedness, and unshaken fortitude, may command an Englishman's respect, if it be contrasted not merely with the conduct of the continental courts, but with the recorded sentiments of that party in our own state, who, during this arduous contest, represented the struggle as hopeless, and whose language, though it failed either to dispirit or to disgust the Spaniards, served most certainly to encourage the enemy. England has had abundant cause to be grateful to Providence, but never, in these latter times, has it had greater than for escaping, more than once, the imminent danger of having this party for its rulers. They would have deserted the last, the truest, of our allies; they would have betrayed the last, the only hope of Europe and of

the world ; they would have sacrificed our honour first, and when they had brought home the war to our own doors, which their measures inevitably must have done, the lasting infamy which they had entailed upon the nation would have been a worse evil than the dreadful and perilous trial through which it would have had to pass.

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In their choice of the regents the Junta seem to have looked for the fittest persons, without regard to any other considerations. Three of them were well known. The Bishop of Orense was venerable for his public conduct, as well as for his age and exemplary virtues ; no man had contributed more signally to rouse and maintain the spirit of the country. Castaños had received from the Junta a species of ill treatment, which was in the spirit of the old government, but for which they made amends by this appointment. When he was ordered as a sort of banishment to his own house at Algeiras, the people of that place, greatly to their honour, mounted a volunteer guard before the house, as a mark of respect ; and the Junta, in the last days of their administration, when they turned their eyes about in distress, called upon him to take the command, and resume the rank of captain-general of the four kingdoms of Andalusia. The call was too late, but he came to the Isle of Leon in time to rescue some members of that body from the populace of Xerez ; and in nominating him to the regency, they seem to have consulted the wishes of the people. Saavedra was in full popularity, and had given good proof of disinterested zeal during the tumult at Seville. Instead of securing his private property, he occupied himself in calming the people, and in preserving the public treasure and the more valuable public records ; and as there was a want of vessels, he embarked the public property on board the one which had been hired for his own effects. Escano had been minister of marine at Madrid, and was known as a man of busi-

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CHAP. XXVIII. 1810. February. ness and fidelity. Leon's appointment was not agreeable to the Junta of Cadiz, who felt their power, and were determined to derive from it as much advantage as possible; he therefore declined accepting the office on the plea of ill health, and D. Miguel de Lardizabal y Ariba, a native of the province of Tlaxcalla, in New Spain, and member of the council of the Indies, was appointed in his stead.

Their injustice towards the members of the Central Junta.

A government was thus formed, which, receiving its authority from the Supreme Junta, derived it ultimately from the same lawful source, ... the choice of the people and the necessity of the state. In such times, and in a nation which attaches a sort of religious reverence to forms, it was of prime importance that the legitimacy of the new government should be apparent, and its right of succession clear and indisputable. For this Spain was principally indebted to Jovellanos, the last and not the least service which that irreproachable and excellent man rendered to his country. But it was the fate of Jovellanos, notwithstanding the finest talents, the most diligent discharge of duty, the purest patriotism, and the most unsullied honour, to be throughout his life the victim of the unhappy circumstances of Spain. Seven years' imprisonment, by the will and pleasure of the despicable Godoy, was a light evil compared with the injustice which he now endured from that government which he, more than any other individual, had contributed to appoint and to legitimate. The council of Castille, which first acknowledged the Intruder, and then acknowledged the Junta, in the same time-serving spirit attacked the Junta now that it was fallen, affirmed that its power had been a violent usurpation, which the nation had rather tolerated than consented to, and that the members had exercised this usurped power contrary to law, and with the most open and notorious selfishness and ambition. The people, not contented with their compulsory resignation, accused them of

having peculated the public money ; and the regency, yielding to the temper of the times, and perhaps courting popularity, acted as if it believed this charge, registered their effects, and seized their papers. Even Jovellanos was ordered to retire to his own province, which happened at that time to be free from the enemy, and there place himself under the inspection of the magistrates. This act is inexpiable disgraceful to those from whom it proceeded ; upon Jovellanos it could entail no disgrace. He had long learnt to bear oppression, and patiently to suffer wrong ; but this injury came with the sting of ingratitude, it struck him to the heart, and embittered his few remaining days.

This rigorous treatment of the Central Junta was the work of their implacable enemy, the council of Castille, a body which they ought to have dissolved and branded for its submission to the Intruder ; and of the Junta of Cadiz, a corporation equally daring and selfish, who thought that in proportion as they could blacken the character of the former government, they should increase their own credit with the people. The members of that government had given the best proof of innocence ; not one of them had gone over to the enemy, nor even attempted to conceal himself at a time when the popular hatred against them had been violently excited. Several of them had embarked on board a Spanish frigate for the Canaries ; when their baggage was seized, it was, at their own request, examined before the crew, and the examination proved that they had scarcely the means of performing the voyage with tolerable comfort. Tilly died in prison without a trial. This was a thoroughly worthless man, and it might probably have appeared that he had found means of enriching himself when he was sent, in the manner of the republican commissioners in France, to superintend the army which defeated Dupont. But Calvo, who was arrested also and thrown into a dungeon, without a bed to lie on or a change of

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CHAP. linen, and whose wife also was put in confinement, was irre-
 XXVIII. proachable in his public character. He had been one of the
 1810. prime movers of that spirit which has sanctified the name of
 February. Zaragoza, and during the first siege repeatedly led the inha-
 bitants against the French. All his papers had been seized; he
 repeatedly called upon the regency to print every one of them,
 to publish his accounts, and bring him to a public trial; but he
 was no more attended to than if he had been in the Seven Towers
 of Constantinople. After the Cortes assembled he obtained a
 trial, and was pronounced innocent.

*Proclama-
 tion of the
 Intruder.*

The Intruder, following his armies, and thinking to obtain possession of Cadiz, and destroy the legitimate government of Spain, issued a proclamation at Cordoba, characterized by the impiety and falsehood which marked the whole proceedings of the French in this atrocious usurpation. "The moment was arrived," he said, "when the Spaniards could listen with advantage to the truths which he was about to utter. During more than a century the force of circumstances, which masters all events, had determined that Spain should be the friend and ally of France. When an extraordinary revolution hurled from the throne the house which reigned in France, it was the duty of the Spanish branch to support it, and not lay down its arms until it was re-established. But it required a spirit of heroism to adopt such a resolution, and the cabinet of Madrid thought it better to wait for that from the progress of time, which it wanted courage to obtain by arms." This truth, for such the Intruder might well call this part of the proclamation, marks, as much as the falsehoods which accompanied it, the devilish spirit by which the French councils had long been possessed; having allured the Spanish Bourbons by oaths and treaties to their own destruction, France now reproached them with the very conduct which she had tempted them to pursue. The paper proceeded to

affirm, that during its whole alliance with France, Spain had been watching an opportunity of falling upon her. “The conqueror of Europe,” it continued, “would not allow himself to be duped. The princes of the house of Spain, not having the courage to fight, renounced the crown, and were content to make stipulations for their private interests. The Spanish grandees, the generals, the chiefs of the nation, recognized those treaties. I,” said the Intruder, received their oaths at Madrid, but the occurrence at Baylen threw every thing into confusion. The timid became alarmed, but the enlightened and conscientious remained true to me. A new continental war, and the assistance of England, prolonged an unequal contest, of which the nation feels all the horrors. The issue was never doubtful, and the fate of arms has now declared so. If tranquillity is not immediately restored, who can foresee the consequence? It is the interest of France to preserve Spain entire and independent, if she become again her friend and ally; but if she continue her enemy, it is the duty of France to weaken, to dismember, and to destroy her. God, who reads the hearts of men, knows with what view I thus address you. Spaniards! the irrevocable destiny is not yet pronounced. Cease to suffer yourselves to be duped by the common enemy. Employ your understanding: it will point out to you in the French troops, friends who are ready to defend you. It is yet time: rally around me! and may this open to Spain a new era of glory and happiness.”

If the Spaniards had had as little wisdom, or as little sense of national honour, as the party who opposed the measures of government in England, they would have believed the Intruder, and submitted to him. This party, who, at the time of Sir John Moore's retreat, told us that the Spaniards had then yielded, and that their fate was decided, now declared, with a little more prudence in their predictions, that the show of resistance must

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*Language
of the de-
spondents in
England.*

CHAP. soon be at an end. The king's message, declaring that Great
XXVIII. Britain would continue its assistance to the great cause of
1810. Spain, as the most important considerations of policy and
February. of good faith required, excited in them the gloomiest fore-
bodings. "We were then still," they said, "to cling to the
forlorn hope of maintaining a footing in Portugal! Our re-
sources were still farther to be drained in supporting our ally,
or rather in supporting a system which did not arouse its own
people to its defence; and for our efforts, however strenuous, in
the support of which we did not receive either their gratitude or
their co-operation. It was reported," they said, "that the En-
glish army had made a retrograde movement to Lisbon, and
actually embarked in the transports at the mouth of the Tagus.
Having uniformly declared their opinion, that this expedition,
under Lord Wellington, was injurious to the most important in-
terests of the country, as they affected both its resources and its
character, they should most sincerely and warmly congratulate
the public if such were its termination." That is, they would
have congratulated us if we had broken our faith, deserted our
allies, fled before our enemies, left Buonaparte to obtain pos-
session of Cadiz and Lisbon, and then waited tremblingly for
him upon our own shores, with our resources carefully husbanded
till it pleased him to come and take them!

"It has been conjectured," said these hopeful politicians,
"that Cadiz might be abundantly supplied from the opposite
coast of Barbary. But those who hazarded this opinion were
not precisely informed of the state of things on the African
coast. The Emperor of Morocco was extremely unfriendly to
his Christian neighbours. Cadiz, to be sure, was an interesting
point, which it was our interest to maintain as long as possible;
but they had no expectation that Cadiz, when really attacked,
could long hold out. It could not be supplied with fuel with

which to bake bread for the inhabitants for one week." While this party thus displayed their presumptuous ignorance, and vented their bitter mortification in insults against the ministry and against our allies, they endeavoured to direct attention toward the Spanish colonies, saying that the great, and indeed only object, of this country, should be to establish a mercantile connexion with the empire which was to be erected there, and recommending that we should take immediate measures for assisting the emigration of the Spanish patriots! Happily the councils of Great Britain were directed by wiser heads, and the people of Spain actuated by better principles and by a braver spirit. "We are supported," said Romana to his countrymen, "by the illustrious English nation, who are united with the brave Portuguese, our brethren, possessing a common interest with ourselves, and who never will abandon us." The people and the government had the same confidence in British honour. English and Portuguese troops were dispatched from Lisbon to assist in the defence of Cadiz, and Ceuta was delivered in trust to an English garrison.

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The Isle of Leon forms an irregular triangle, of which the longest side is separated from the main land by a channel, called the river of Santi Petri, ten miles in length, and navigable for the largest ships. This side is strongly fortified, and the situation also is peculiarly strong. The bridge of Zuazo, built originally by the Romans, over the channel, is flanked with batteries, and communicates with the continent by a causeway over impassable marshes. There are two towns upon the island; that which bears the same name, and which contains about 40,000 inhabitants, is nearly in the middle of the isle; the other, called St. Carlos, which stands a little to the north, was newly erected, and consisted chiefly of barracks and other public buildings. Cadiz stands on the end of a tongue of land seven miles in

*The Isle of
Leon.*

CHAP. length, extending from the isle into the bay ; this isthmus is from
XXVIII. a quarter to half a mile broad, flanked on one side by the sea,
1810. and on the other by the bay of Cadiz. Along this isthmus, an
February. enemy who had made himself master of the island must pass ;
new batteries had been formed, new works thrown up, and mines
dug ; and if these obstacles were overcome, his progress would
then be opposed by regular fortifications, upon which the utmost
care and expense had been bestowed for rendering the city im-
pregnable. Before this unexpected and unexampled aggression
on the part of France, the great object of the Spanish government
had been to render Cadiz secure from the sea : as soon, therefore,
as the approach of the enemy was certain, one of the first opera-
tions was to demolish all those works on the main land from
whence the shipping could be annoyed. This was a precaution
which Admiral Purvis had strongly advised after the battle of Me-
dellin, and again as soon as the more ruinous defeat of Areizaga
was known. Upon the first report that the enemy were hasten-
ing toward Cadiz, in the hope of surprising it, he requested
Admiral Alava to remove the ships, and place them in the
lower part of the harbour, where they might be secure ; but it
was not till Mr. Frere had strongly urged the necessity of this
precaution that the Spanish Admiral, after much reasoning on
his part, reluctantly complied. The ill spirit which at this time
prevailed among the naval officers arose rather from the pitiable
situation in which they found themselves, than from any pre-
dilection for the French, or the more natural feeling of hostility
toward the English in which they had grown up. Men being
wanted for the land service, and not for the fleet, the navy had
been neglected during this contest : the ships were ill manned
and miserably stored, the pay far in arrears ; and the officers
had latterly disregarded their duty as much as they thought
themselves disregarded by the government, . . hopelessness pro-

ducing discontent, and discontent growing into disaffection. This temper could produce no ill effect when the regency and the people were so well disposed. The fleet was removed in time; and the hulks also in which the miserable prisoners were confined were moved lower down into the bay, and moored under the guns of the English and Spanish ships.

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The British Admiral had represented in time how important it was that the batteries on the north side of the harbour should be kept in an efficient state. The danger now was from the land side, not from the sea, and by good fortune the land quarter had been strengthened some fifty years before, at a cost and with a care which had then been deemed superfluous. But the Spanish government had not forgotten that it was on that side Essex had made his attack, and England was the enemy against whom those precautions were taken. At that time every villa and garden upon the isthmus had been destroyed. During after years of security the ground had again been covered, and was now to be cleared again. The Spaniards, roused by the exertions and example of Alburquerque, as much as by the immediate danger, laboured at the works, and carefully removed every building on the isthmus. Night and day these labours were carried on, and the sound of explosions was almost perpetual. The wood from the demolished buildings was taken into the city for fuel.

Marshal Victor, before he understood how well the isle was secured, sent a summons to the Junta of Cadiz, telling them he was ready to receive their submission to King Joseph. Jaen, Cordova, Seville, and Granada, he said, had received the French with joy; he expected the same reception from the people of Cadiz; and as the fleets and arsenals were the property of the nation, he demanded that they should be preserved for their rightful sovereign. They returned an answer, signed by every

*Victor summons the
Junta of
Cadiz.*

CHAP. individual of their body, declaring that they acknowledged no
 XXVIII. one for King of Spain but Ferdinand VII. Soult also, represent-
 1810. ing the English as the enemies of Spain, insinuated, in a sum-
February. mons to Alburquerque, that it was their intention to seize Cadiz
 for themselves. Alburquerque replied, no such design was enter-
 tained by the British nation, who were not less generous than
 they were great and brave; their only object was to assist in the
 defence of Cadiz with all the means in which they abounded,
 an assistance which the Spaniards solicited and gratefully re-
 ceived. Cadiz, he added, had nothing to fear from a force of
 100,000 men; the Spaniards knew that the French commanded
 no more than the ground which they covered, and they would
 never lay down their arms till they had effected the deliverance
 of their country.

*Ill-will of
 the Junta
 towards Al-
 burquerque.*

The service which Alburquerque had rendered was so signal,
 and its importance so perfectly understood by all the people of
 Cadiz, that he was deservedly looked upon as the saviour of the
 place. Having been appointed governor in obedience to the
 general wish, he became in consequence president of the Junta,
 as Venegas had been before him, whose obedient policy was
 now rewarded by the highest station to which a subject could
 be appointed, that of viceroy of Mexico. Alburquerque had
 not solicited these appointments; on the contrary, he remon-
 strated against them, pointing out how impossible it was, that,
 having the command of the army, he could attend to other duties
 at the same time; and in consequence of his representations,
 D. Andres Lopez de Sagastizabal was nominated to act as his
 deputy in both capacities. The Junta of Cadiz had obtained
 their power unexceptionably, but no men ever made a more un-
 worthy use of it; they had reluctantly assented to the formation
 of the regency, and when it was formed, endeavoured to restrain
 and overrule it, and engross as much authority as possible to

themselves, in which, unhappily for Spain, and more unhappily for Spanish America, they were but too successful. Albuquerque became the marked object of their dislike, because he had recognised the regency at a moment when, if he had hesitated, they would have struggled to get the whole power of government into their own hands. That spirit, which had never condescended to conceal its indignant contempt for Godoy, could not stoop to court the favour of a Junta of mercantile monopolists. Not that he despised them as such; his mind was too full of noble enterprises to bestow a thought upon them, otherwise than as men who were called upon to do their duty while he did his.

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His first business had been to complete the unfinished works of defence, especially the *cortadura*, or cut across the isthmus, where the battery of St. Fernando was erected; and lest any attempt should be made to pass beside it at low water, the iron gratings from the windows of the public buildings were removed, and placed on the beach as a chevaux-de-frise. While these things were going on, the people of Cadiz manifested a disgraceful indolence; they assembled in crowds on the ramparts, wrapt in their long cloaks, and there stood gazing silently for hours, while the English were employed in blowing up the forts round the bay; appearing, says an eye-witness, indifferent spectators of the events around them, rather than the persons for whose security these exertions were made. Meantime the troops, whose rapid march had placed these idlers out of fear, were neglected in a manner not less cruel to the individuals than it was detrimental to the public service. The points to be protected were so many, that the numbers of this little army did not suffice to guard them, without exhausting the men by double duty. Albuquerque requested that the regiments might be filled from the numberless idle inhabitants of the isle and of Cadiz, who,

*The troops
neglected.*

CHAP. while they were idle, were at such a time worse than useless.
 XXVIII. Unless this were done, he said, it was not only impossible for
 1810. his men to undertake any offensive operations, or even to improve
February. themselves in discipline, but they must be wasted away with
 fatigue and consequent infirmities. These representations were
 in vain ; neither was he more successful in requiring their pay,
 a supply of clothing, of which they stood evidently in need,
 and those common comforts in their quarters, which were as re-
 quisite for health as for decency. The Junta of Cadiz had seven
 hundred pieces of cloth in their possession, yet more than a
 month elapsed, and nothing was done toward clothing the almost
 naked troops. Alburquerque asserts, as a fact within his own
 positive knowledge, that the reason was, because the Junta were
 at that time contending with the Regency, to get the management
 of the public money into their own hands, and meant, if they
 had failed, to sell this cloth to the government, and make a
 profit upon it, as merchants, of eight reales *per vara* !

*Alburquerque
 applies
 to the Re-
 gency in
 their behalf.*

It is not to be supposed that the Junta were idle at this time ;
 they had many and urgent duties to attend to ; but no duty could
 be more urgent than that of supplying the wants and increasing
 the force of the army. The Duke applied to them in vain for
 six weeks, during which time he discovered that the Junta looked
 as much to their private interest as to the public weal ; for from
 the beginning, he says, their aim was to get the management of
 the public expenditure, not merely for the sake of the influence
 which accompanies it, but that they might repay themselves the
 sums which they had lent, and make their own advantage by
 trading with the public money. At length he applied to the
 Regency. The regents, feeling how little influence they pos-
 sessed over the Junta, advised the Duke to publish the memorial
 which he had presented to them, thinking that it would excite
 the feelings of the people. In this they were not deceived ; ..

the people, now for the first time called upon to relieve the wants of the soldiers, exerted themselves liberally, and there was not a family in which some contribution was not made for the defenders of the country. But the Junta were exasperated to the last degree by this measure, which their own culpable neglect had rendered necessary. Alburquerque's memorial contained no complaint against them; it only stated the wants of the soldiers, and requested that, unless those wants were supplied, he might be relieved from a command, the duties of which, under such circumstances, it was not possible for him to perform. Though he was persuaded of their selfish views, he had no design of exposing an evil which there was no means of remedying; and when he understood how violently they were offended, he addressed a letter to them, disclaiming any intention of inculpating them, in terms which nothing but his earnest desire of avoiding all dissensions that might prove injurious to the country could either dictate or justify. This did not prevent the Junta from publishing an attack upon him, in reply, of the most virulent nature. They reproached him with having exposed the wants and weakness of the army; entered into details as frivolous in themselves as they were false in their application, to show that they had done every thing for the soldiers; declared, with an impudence of ingratitude which it is not possible to reprobate in severer terms than it deserves, that his cavalry had retreated too precipitately, and ought to have brought in grain with them; and concluded by a menacing intimation, that the people of Cadiz were ready to support them against any persons who should attempt to impeach their proceedings. If the Junta of Cadiz had no other sins to answer for, this paper alone would be sufficient to render their name odious in history; so unprovoked was it in its temper, so false in its details, so detestable for its ingratitude. Had Albur-

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attack Al-
burquerque.*

CHAP. querque been capable of consulting his own safety by a preci-
 XXVIII. pitate retreat, Portugal, as he said, and the English army were at
 1810. hand, . . and he needed not to have undertaken an arduous march
 February. of 260 miles in the face of a superior enemy, and in direct dis-
 obedience of the orders of his government. If the cavalry which
 saved Cadiz, and which they thus wantonly accused of retreating
 too precipitately, had been even a quarter of an hour later, it
 could not have entered the Isle of Leon. "This," said the in-
 dignant Duke, "is the patriotism of the Junta of Cadiz; the
 enemy is at the gates, and they throw out a defiance to the ge-
 neral and the army who protect them!"

*He resigns
 the com-
 mand.*

But Alburquerque was too sincere a lover of his country to
 expose it to the slightest danger, even for the sake of his own
 honour. He could not resent this infamous attack without ex-
 citing a perilous struggle; and without resenting it he felt it im-
 possible to remain at the head of the army. Having thus been
 publicly insulted, a reparation as public was necessary to his
 honour, and that reparation, for the sake of Spain, he delayed to
 demand. The Regency would have had him continue in the
 command; he however persisted in resigning. No injustice
 which could be done him, he said, would ever have made him
 cease to present himself in the front of danger, had he not been
 compelled to withdraw for fear of the fatal consequences of in-
 ternal discord. Accordingly, he who should have been leading,
 and who would have led, the men who loved him to victory,
 came over to England as ambassador, with a wounded spirit
 and a broken heart.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ATTEMPTS TO DELIVER FERDINAND. OVERTURES FOR A NEGOTIATION MADE THROUGH HOLLAND. PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT CONCERNING PORTUGAL. REFORM OF THE PORTUGUEZE ARMY.

THE regency was acknowledged without hesitation in those 1810. provinces which were not yet overrun by the enemy, and every where by those Spaniards who resisted the usurpation; yet with the authority which they derived from the Supreme Junta a portion of its unpopularity had descended upon them. The necessity of their appointment was perceived, and the selection of the members was not disapproved: in fact, public opinion had in a great degree directed the choice; nevertheless when they were chosen, a feeling seemed to prevail that the men upon whom that unfortunate body had devolved their power could not be worthy of the national confidence. Like their predecessors, they were in fact surrounded by the same system of sycophancy and intrigue which had subsisted under the monarchy. The same swarm was about them: it was a state plague with which Spain had been afflicted from the age of the Philips. Hence it came to pass that the national force, instead of being invigorated by the concentration of legitimate power, was sometimes paralysed by it. For if a fairer prospect appeared to open in the provinces where the people had been left to themselves and to chiefs of their own choosing, too often when a communication

The Regency.

CHAP. was opened with the seat of government, this unwholesome in-
 XXIX. fluence was felt in the appointment of some inefficient general,
 1810. who was perhaps a stranger to the province which he was sent
 to command.

A central government was, however, indispensable, as a means of communication first with England, and eventually with other states, but more especially as keeping together the whole body of the monarchy both in Europe and in America. The Spanish nation was not more sensible of this than the British ministry. The French, and they who, like the French, reasoning upon the principles of a philosophy as false as it is degrading, believe that neither states nor individuals are ever directed in their conduct by the disinterested sense of honour and of duty, supposed that the continuance of these temporary administrations must be conformable to the wishes of the British cabinet, whose influence would be in proportion to the weakness and precarious tenure of those who held the government in Spain. But that cabinet had no covert designs; they acted upon the principle of a plain, upright, open policy, which deserves, and will obtain, the approbation of just posterity; and so far were they from pursuing any system of selfish and low-minded cunning, that at this time, when the regency was formed, they were taking measures for effecting the deliverance of Ferdinand from captivity.

*Schemes for
 delivering
 Ferdinand.*

Montijo, before his hostility to the Junta was openly declared, had proposed a scheme to them for this purpose; but he was too well known to be trusted, and when he required as a preliminary measure that 50,000 dollars should be given him, Calvo, who was the member appointed to hear what he might propose, plainly told him that his object was to employ that sum in raising a sedition against the government; upon which Montijo told him that he had a good scent, and thus the matter

ended. A similar proposal was made by some adventurer in Catalonia; the provincial government was disposed to listen to it, but they referred it to General Doyle, and he soon ascertained that the projector only wanted to get money and decamp with it. Meantime the British ministers had formed a well-concerted plan, but dependent upon some fearful contingencies, . . . the fidelity of every one to whom in its course of performance it must necessarily be communicated, and the disposition of Ferdinand to put his life upon the hazard in the hope of recovering his liberty and his throne. The Baron de Kolli, who was the person chosen for this perilous service, was one who in other secret missions had proved himself worthy of confidence. He took with him for credentials the letter in which Ferdinand's marriage in the year 1802 had been announced by Charles IV. to the King of England, and also letters in Latin and in French from the King, communicating to the prisoner the state of affairs in Spain, and saying how important it was that he should escape from captivity, and show himself in the midst of his faithful people. A squadron, commanded by Sir George Cockburn, landed Kolli in Quiberon Bay, and to that part of the coast Ferdinand was to have directed his flight, for which every needful and possible provision had been made, measures having also been devised for sending the pursuers upon a wrong scent. The scheme had been well laid, and with such apparent probability of success, that it is said the Duke of Kent requested permission to take upon himself the danger of the attempt. The squadron was provided with every thing which could conduce to the convenience and comfort of Ferdinand and his brother; with this view a Roman catholic priest had been embarked, with a regular set of ornaments and consecrated plate for the Romish service.

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*Baron de
Kolli's at-
tempt.*

*Kolli's Me-
moirs, 39.*

Kolli made his way to Paris, completed his arrangements,

CHAP. and was arrested at Vincennes within a fortnight from the day
XXIX. whereon he landed. He had been betrayed by a pretended
1810. royalist in the pay of the British government, and by the Sieur
March. Richard, whom he had trusted because he had served bravely
under the unfortunate Prince de Talmont in La Vendée. His
credentials and his other papers were seized; and when he
was examined by Fouché, who was then minister of police,
he had the mortification of being told that the character of the
person for whose service he had thus exposed himself had been
entirely mistaken, for that no credentials would induce Fer-
dinand to hazard such an attempt. It was afterwards proposed to
him, that as his life and the fortune of his children were at stake,
he should proceed to Valençay, and execute his commission, to
the end that he might hear from Ferdinand's own lips his dis-
avowal of any connexion with England, . . or that if that prince
really entertained a wish to escape, an opportunity might be
given him of which the French government might make such
use as it deemed best. Kolli rejected this with becoming
spirit; and the purpose of the police was just as well answered
by sending Richard to personate him. But Ferdinand no sooner
understood the ostensible object of his visitor, than he informed
the governor of Valençay that an English emissary was in the
castle.

It is very possible that Ferdinand may have perceived some-
thing in Richard's manner more likely to excite suspicion than
to win confidence; for the man was not a proficient in villany,
and not having engaged in it voluntarily, may have felt some
compunction concerning the business whereon he was sent. His
instructions were, if he should succeed in entrapping Ferdinand,
to bring him straight to Vincennes, there probably to have been
placed in close confinement: the supposition that a tragedy like
that of the Duc d'Enghein was intended cannot be admitted

without supposing in Buonaparte far greater respect for the personal character of his victim than he could possibly have entertained. An official report was published, containing a letter in Ferdinand's name, wherein the project for his escape was called scandalous and infernal, and a hope expressed that the authors and accomplices of it might be punished as they deserved. Other papers were published at the same time, with the same obvious design of exposing Ferdinand to the indignation or contempt of his countrymen and of his allies. There was a letter of congratulation to the Emperor Napoleon upon his victories in Austria; an expression of gratitude for his protection, and of implicit obedience to his wishes and commands; details of a fête which he had given just before this occurrence in honour of the Emperor's marriage with the Archduchess Maria Louisa; and a letter requesting an interview with the governor of Valençay upon a subject of the greatest moment to himself, being his wish to become the adopted son of the Emperor, an adoption which, the writer said, would constitute the happiness of his life, and of which he conceived himself worthy by his perfect love and attachment to the sacred person of his majesty, and entire submission to his intentions and desires. But it was so notoriously the system of Buonaparte's government to publish any falsehoods which might serve a present purpose, that these letters, whether genuine or fabricated, obtained no credit *.

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* The account of Kolli's examination had in one part been palpably falsified. He was represented as saying that it was the Duke of Kent's wish to send Ferdinand to Gibraltar; but that he would not have assisted in this plan, because it would have been in fact sending him to prison! The whole of these documents are printed in Louis Goldsmith's *Recueil de Decrets, Ordonnances, &c.* t. iv. pp. 302-14; and by Llorente, in his *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Revolution d'Espagne*, t. ii. pp. 306-342. This unworthy Spaniard expresses there a decided opinion that Kolli himself was the person who went to Valençay, as the official report stated. The

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As soon as the official report appeared in the English newspapers, Mr. Whitbread asked in the House of Commons whether the letter purporting to be written by his Majesty to Ferdinand VII. was to be looked upon as a document which had any pretensions to the character of authenticity? a question which Mr. Perceval declined answering. Of course this afforded a topic for exultation and insult to the opponents of the government. The Spaniards felt very differently upon the occasion. Whether those who were desirous of forming a new constitution for Spain, or even of correcting the inveterate abuses of the old system, thought it desirable to see Ferdinand in possession of the throne, before their object was effected, may well be doubted; but whatever their opinions might be upon that point, the attempt at delivering him excited no other feelings than those of gratitude and admiration towards Great Britain. “With what pleasure,” said the best and wisest of their writers, “does the good man who observes the mazes of political events, behold one transaction of which humanity alone was the end and aim! With what interest does he contemplate an expedition intended, not for speculations of commerce, nor for objects of ambition, but for the deliverance of a captive King, in the hope of restoring him to his throne and to his people!”

Español,
t. i. 120.

Baron, however, has published his own story, and it is confirmed by the declarations of Richard and Fouché, authentically made after the restoration of the Bourbons.

One curious fact appears in the Baron de Kolli's Memoirs. Diamonds to the amount of 200,000 francs were taken from him by the police when he was seized. After the restoration he reclaimed them. The result of his application was a royal ordonnance, in which the King decided, that the other effects belonging to the claimant should be restored to him, but that the diamonds seized at Paris are, and remain, confiscated, as having been given to the Sieur de Kolli by a government then at war with France. And his renewed applications were answered by a repetition of this ordonnance!

The British cabinet was sounded to see whether it would offer such compensations and exchange of prisoners as might extricate Kolli from his perilous situation. This curious proposal was connected with some insidious overtures for peace made then, partly for the purpose of deceiving the French people into a belief that the continuance of the war was owing alone to the inveterate feeling of hostility in England; but more with the design of preparing the Dutch for the annexation of their country to the French empire, an intention which was first avowed in these overtures. Louis Buonaparte was drawn into this transaction by a solemn assurance that no such intention was really entertained; but that it was held forth merely as a feint, in the hope of alarming the British government, and inducing it to make peace, for the sake of averting a political union, which of all measures must be most dangerous to England. The overture was properly rejected upon the ground, that it would be useless, or worse than useless, to open a negotiation when it was certain that insurmountable difficulties must occur in its first stage. A few weeks only elapsed before the purpose which had been solemnly disavowed by Buonaparte's ministers to Louis was carried into effect, by a compulsory treaty, in which that poor king ceded to France the provinces of Zealand and Dutch Brabant, the territory between the Maas and the Waal, including Nimeguen, together with the Bommelwaard and the territory of Altena, inasmuch as it had been adopted for a constitutional principle in France that the *thalweg* or stream of the Rhine formed the boundary of the French empire. About two months after this act of insolent and wanton power an army was ordered into Holland to complete the usurpation, and Louis, giving the only proof of integrity and courage which was possible in his unhappy circumstances, abdicated the throne, and retired into the Austrian dominions, leaving behind him a letter to the Dutch

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Overtures
for peace.

CHAP. legislature, which contained a full vindication of his own con-
 XXIX. duct, and an exposure of Napoleon's traitorous policy, which,
 1810. given as it was in the most cautious language, and with a re-
 April. mainder of respect and even brotherly affection, might alone
 suffice to stamp the character* of that brother with lasting in-
 famy. During his short and miserable reign Louis had done
 what, considering in what manner he had been placed upon the
 throne, it might have seemed almost impossible that he should
 do, he had gained the affections of the Dutch people; not by any
 good which he did, for his tyrannical brother neither allowed him
 time nor means for effecting the benevolent measures which he
 designed, but by the interest which he took in their sufferings,
 and by his honest endeavours to prevent or mitigate those acts
 of tyranny which were intended to increase the distress of a ruined
 country, and prepare it for this catastrophe.

Buona-
 parte's in-
 tent of
 establishing
 a Western
 Empire.
 Feb. 17.

The conquest of Holland had been an old object of French
 ambition; but wider views than Louis XIV. entertained during
 the spring-tide of his prosperity were at this time disclosed
 by Buonaparte. A *senatus consultum* appeared early in the

* Notwithstanding the facility with which, in many instances, Louis was deluded
 by his brother, and the curious simplicity of character which he exhibits, it is im-
 possible to peruse his *Documens Historiques et Reflexions sur le Gouvernement de la*
Hollande, without feeling great respect for him. His conduct was irreproachable,
 his views benevolent even when erroneous, his intentions uniformly good; and ex-
 cellent indeed must that disposition have been, which in such trying circumstances
 always preserved its natural rectitude.

It appears by these documents that the throne of Spain was offered to him
 before Joseph was thought of, and that he rejected the proposal as at once impolitic
 and iniquitous. But it is curious to see how completely he had been deceived con-
 cerning the course of events in the Peninsula, and still more extraordinary that in
 the year 1820 (when his book was published) he appears to have obtained no better
 information upon that subject than was communicated in the *Moniteur* during his
 brother's reign.

year, decreeing that the Papal States should be united to, and form an integral part of the French empire. The city of Rome was declared to be the second in the empire (Amsterdam was named the third); the Prince Imperial was to take the title of King of Rome, and the Emperors, after having been crowned in the church of Notre Dame at Paris, were before the tenth year of their reign to be crowned in St. Peter's also. The measures that were designed to follow upon this decree were unequivocally intimated, in that semi-official manner by which Buonaparte's schemes of ambition were always first announced. "The Roman and German imperial dignity," it was said, "which, with regard to Rome, had long been an empty name, had ceased to exist upon the abdication of the Emperor Francis; from that time, therefore, the great Emperor of the French had a right to assume the title. Napoleon, who revoked the gifts which Charlemagne made to the bishops of Rome, might now, as legitimate lord paramount of Rome, like his illustrious predecessor, style himself Roman and French Emperor. He restores to the Romans the eagle which Charlemagne brought from them, and placed upon his palace at Aix la Chapelle; he makes them sharers in his empire and his glory; and a thousand years after the reign of Charlemagne, a new medal will be struck with the inscription *Renovatio Imperii*. After ages of oblivion, the Empire of the West reappears with renovated vigour; for Napoleon the Great must be looked on as the founder of a revived Western Empire, and in this character he will prove a blessing to civilized Europe. The peace of Europe will thus be completely re-established. The great number of well-meaning people, to whom Napoleon's power seemed oppressive, while they considered themselves as exempt from any engagement towards him, will fulfil their new duties with inviolable fidelity. Considered in this point of view, the re-establishment of the Western Empire

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CHAP. is a duty which Napoleon owes not less to the law of self-pre-
 XXIX. servation, than to the repose of Europe."

1810.

No opposition to this project could have been offered by the continental princes; the yoke was upon their necks: it only remained for him to complete the subjugation of the Peninsula, and this appeared to him and his admirers an easy task, to be accomplished in one short campaign. There was no longer any Spanish force in the field capable of even momentarily diverting the French from their great object of destroying the English army, and obtaining possession of Portugal, and to that object Buonaparte might now direct his whole attention and his whole power.

Lord Wellington had foreseen this, and clearly perceiving also what would be the business of the ensuing campaign, had prepared for the defence of Portugal in time. It was necessary that we should carry on the war in that country as principals rather than as allies, and for this full power had been given by the Prince of Brazil. As yet little had been done toward the improvement of the Portuguese army; like the government it was in the worst possible condition; both were in the lowest state of degradation to which ignorance, and imbecility, and inveterate abuses could reduce them. Early in the session, parliament was informed that the King had authorized pecuniary advances to be made to Portugal, in support of its military exertions, and had made an arrangement for the maintenance of a body of troops not exceeding 30,000 men. Twenty thousand we already had in our pay, the sum for whom was estimated at 600,000*l.*; for the additional ten, it was stated at 250,000*l.* to which was to be added 130,000*l.* for the maintenance of officers to be employed in training these levies, and preparing them to act with the British troops. This led to a very interesting debate in the House of Lords. Marquis Wellesley affirmed, "that Portugal

*Money voted
for the Por-
tuguese
army.*

*Marquis
Wellesley.*

was the most material military position that could be occupied for the purpose of assisting Spain: great disasters, he admitted, had befallen the Spanish cause, still they were far from sinking his mind into despair, and still he would contend, it was neither politic nor just to manifest any intention of abandoning Portugal. What advantage could be derived from casting over our own councils, and over the hopes of Portugal and Spain, the hue and complexion of despair? To tell them that the hour of their fate was arrived, . . . that all attempts to assist, or even to inspirit their exertions in their own defence, were of no avail, . . . that they must bow the neck and submit to the yoke of a merciless invader, . . . this indeed would be to strew the conqueror's path with flowers, to prepare the way for his triumphal march to the throne of the two kingdoms! Was it then for this that so much treasure had been expended, . . . that so much of the blood had been shed of those gallant and loyal nations? Whatever disasters had befallen them, they were not imputable to the people of Spain. The spirit of the people was excellent, and he still ventured to hope that it would prove unconquerable. All their defeats and disasters were solely to be ascribed to the vices of their government. It was the imbecility, or treachery, of that vile and wretched government which first opened the breach through which the enemy entered into the heart of Spain; that delivered into hostile hands the fortresses of that country; and betrayed her people defenceless and unarmed into the power of a perfidious foe. Let us not contribute to accomplish what they have so inauspiciously begun! Let not their lordships come to any resolution that can justify Portugal in relaxing her exertions, or Spain in considering her cause as hopeless. Yet what other consequence would result from prematurely withdrawing the British troops from Portugal, or retracting the grounds upon which we had hitherto assisted her?"

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Lord Gren-
ville.

Lord Grenville replied. "He felt it," he said, "an ungrateful task, . . . a painful duty, . . . to recal the attention of their lordships to his former predictions, which they had despised and rejected, but which were now, all of them, too fatally fulfilled. His object, however, was not a mere barren censure of past errors, but rather, from a consideration of those errors, to conjure them to rescue the country from a continuance of the same disasters, and to pay some regard to the lives of their fellow-citizens. Were they disposed to sit in that house day after day, and year after year, spectators of wasteful expenditure, and the useless effusion of so much of the best blood of the country, in hopeless, calamitous, and disgraceful efforts? It was a sacred duty imposed upon them to see that not one more life was wasted, not one more drop of blood shed unprofitably, where no thinking man could say that, by any human possibility, such dreadful sacrifices could be made with any prospect of advantage. Was there any man that heard him, who in his conscience believed that even the sacrifice of the whole of that brave British army would secure the kingdom of Portugal? If," said he, "I receive from any person an answer in the affirmative, I shall be able to judge by that answer of the capacity of such a person for the government of this country, or even for the transaction of public business in a deliberative assembly. By whatever circumstances, . . . by whatever kind of fate it was, I must say, that I always thought the object of the enterprise impossible; but now I believe it is known to all the people of this country, that it has become certainly impossible. Was it then too much to ask of their lordships that another million should not be wasted, when nothing short of a divine miracle could render it effectual to its proposed object?" In these strong and explicit terms did Lord Grenville declare his opinion, that it was impossible for a British army to secure Portugal; and thus distinctly did he affirm, that the opinion of

a statesman upon this single point was a sufficient test of his capacity for government.

After touching upon the convention of Cintra and Sir John Moore's retreat, he spoke of the impolicy of our conduct in Portugal. "If those," he said, "who had the management of public affairs had possessed any wisdom, any capacity for enlightened policy in the regulation of a nation's interests and constitution, any right or sound feelings with regard to the happiness of their fellow-creatures, here had been a wide field opening to them. They had got possession of the kingdom of our ally, with its government dissolved, and no means existing within it for the establishment of any regular authority or civil administration, but such as the British government alone should suggest. Here had been a glorious opportunity for raising the Portuguese nation from that wretched and degraded condition to which a lengthened succession of mental ignorance, civil oppression, and political tyranny and prostitution had reduced it. Was not that an opportunity, which any men capable of enlarged and liberal views of policy, and influenced by any just feelings for the interests of their fellow-creatures, would have eagerly availed themselves of? Would not such men have seized with avidity the favourable occasion to rescue the country from that ignorance and political debasement, which rendered the inhabitants incapable of any public spirit or national feeling? Here was a task worthy of the greatest statesmen; here was an object, in the accomplishment of which there were no talents so transcendent, no capacity so enlarged, no ability so comprehensive, that might not have been well, and beneficially, and gloriously employed. It was a work well suited to a wise and liberal policy, to an enlarged and generous spirit, to every just feeling and sound principle of national interest, . . . to impart the blessings of a free government to the inhabitants of a country so long op-

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CHAP. pressed and disgraced by the greatest tyranny that had ever
XXIX. existed in any nation of Europe."

1810. Then after arguing that time had been lost in arming and
February. disciplining the Portuguese, he relapsed into his strain of unhappy prophecy. "He did not," he said, "mean to undervalue the services or the character of the Portuguese soldiery, whom he considered as possessing qualities capable of being made useful, but he would never admit that they could form a force competent to the defence of the kingdom; they might be useful in desultory warfare, but must be wholly unfit for co-operation with a regular army. He was not afraid, therefore, of any responsibility that might be incurred by his stating, that if the safety of the British army was to be committed on the expectation of such co-operation, it would be exposed to most imminent and perhaps inevitable hazard. But if these 30,000 men were not composed of undisciplined peasants and raw recruits, but consisted of British troops, in addition to the British army already in Portugal, he should consider it nothing but infatuation to think of defending Portugal, even with such a force. Against a power possessing the whole means of Spain, as he must suppose the French to do at this moment, Portugal was the least defensible of any country in Europe. It had the longest line of frontier, compared with its actual extent, of any other nation; besides, from its narrowness, its line of defence would be more likely to be turned: and an invading enemy would derive great advantages from its local circumstances. As to the means of practical defence afforded by its mountains, he should only ask, whether the experience of the last seventeen years had taught the world nothing; whether its instructive lessons were wholly thrown away? Could it be supposed that a country so circumstanced, with a population without spirit, and a foreign general exercising little short of arbitrary power within it, was capable of any effectual

defence?" Lord Grenville concluded this memorable speech, by moving, as an amendment to the usual address, "that the house would without delay enter upon the consideration of these most important subjects, in the present difficult and alarming state of these realms."

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"It was not the fault of ministers," Lord Liverpool replied, "nor of the person whom they had sent thither as his majesty's representative, if the exertions of the Portuguese government were not correspondent to the dangers of the crisis. The state of the country must be recollected, which might truly be said to have been without a government; all the ancient and established authorities having disappeared with the Prince Regent. But, under these unpromising circumstances, every thing was done which could be done. There was no time lost; there was no exertion untried; there was no measure neglected. Never were greater exertions made to provide a sufficient force, and never were they more successful. The noble baron had triumphantly asked, what have we gained in the Peninsula? We have gained the hearts and affections of the whole population of Spain and Portugal; we have gained that of which no triumphs, no successes of the enemy could deprive us. In Portugal, such is the affection of the inhabitants, that there is no want of a British soldier that is not instantly and cheerfully supplied. Look to Spain! What is the feeling of the people, even in this awful moment of national convulsion and existing revolution? It is that of the most complete deference to the British minister and government; and so perfect is their confidence in both, that they have placed their fleet under the orders of the British admiral. Would a cold, cautious, and phlegmatic system of policy have ever produced such proofs of confidence? Would indifference have produced those strong and signal proofs of affection? Whatever might be the issue of the contest, to this

Earl of Liverpool.

CHAP. country would always remain the proud satisfaction of having
 XXIX. done its duty. He trusted we should never abandon Spain, so
 1810. long as any hope remained of the possibility of ultimate success.
 February. We were bound by every sentiment of honour and good faith to
 support a people who had given proofs of honour, of good faith,
 and of bravery, which have never been exceeded by any nation."

Earl Moira. Earl Moira replied to this, by delivering opinions which, as
 a soldier, he would never have conceived, if he had not been
 possessed by party spirit. "Every thing which the ministers
 attempted," he said, "betrayed, as the universal opinion of the
 public pronounced, a total want of judgement, foresight, and
 vigour; and, as the climax of error, they now seemed resolved
 to defend Portugal, . . according to a plan of defence, too, which
 was perfectly impracticable. For it was utterly ridiculous to
 suppose, that the ideas of Count La Lippe, as to the practica-
 bility of defending Portugal from invasion, could now be relied
 upon. We should be allowed to retain Portugal, under our
 present system, just so long as Buonaparte thought proper. The
 administration of these men had been marked by the annihilation
 of every foreign hope, and the reduction of every domestic re-
 source; they who vaunted of their resolution and power to pro-
 tect and liberate the Continent, had only succeeded in bringing
 danger close to our own shores! And why? because they sacri-
 ficed the interests of the nation, and violated every principle of
 public duty, to gratify their personal ambition and personal
 cupidity. He was speaking the language of ninety men out of
 a hundred of the whole population of the country, when he as-
 serted, that they deserved marked reprobation, and exemplary
 punishment."

Lord Sid-
 mouth.

Viscount Sidmouth regretted the opportunities which had
 been lost, but, with his English feeling and his usual fairness,
 insisted that it was incumbent upon us to stand by our allies to

the uttermost. The Marquis of Lansdown objected to the measures of ministry more temperately than his colleagues in opposition, maintaining that it was bad policy to become a principal in a continental war. Lord Erskine spoke in a strain of acrimonious contempt, mingled with irrelevant accusations and unbecoming levity. "There really," said he, "seems to be a sort of predestination, which I will leave the reverend bench to explain, that whenever the French take any country, or any prisoners, they shall have some of our money also. I can hardly account for the infatuation which possesses those men, who suppose they can defend Portugal by sending a supply of British money there. It might as well be expected to accomplish that by sending over the woolsack, with my noble and learned friend upon it."

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Lord Erskine.

The ministers must have been well pleased with the conduct of their opponents; they could not have desired any thing more favourable to themselves than the intemperance which had been displayed, and the rash assertions, and more rash predictions, which had been so boldly hazarded against them. Lord Holland upon this occasion made a remarkable speech, observing, in allusion to Lords Sidmouth and Buckinghamshire, that "he could not understand how these lords could give their confidence to ministers without being assured that their confidence was deserved. We were obliged in honour," he said, "to do what we could for Portugal, without injury to ourselves, . . . in honour, . . . for that was the only motive that ought to interest the feelings, or excite the hearts of this or any other nation. But if we were to embark in the cause of that sinking people, we were not to load them with our imbecility, in addition to their own weakness. A great plan was necessary: nothing neutral or narrow, nothing minute, nothing temporary, could enter into it; but for this qualities were requisite which no man could hope for in the present

Lord Holland.

CHAP. XXIX. ministry. Where was the address, the ability, the knowledge, the public spirit, that were the soul of success in such a cause? 1810. He found them shifting from object to object, and hanging their hope on every weak and bending support, that failed them in the first moment of pressure. He thought, that for defence no government could be too free; by that he meant too democratic; the words might not be synonymous, but it was in such governments that men felt of what they were capable. There was then the full stretch of all the powers. There was a great struggle, a great allay of the baser passions; but there rose from them a spirit vigorous, subtilized, and pure; there was the triumph of all the vehement principles of the nation; the rapid intelligence, the bold decision, the daring courage, the stern love of country. In was in the hour of struggle that men started up among the ranks of the people; those bright shapes of valour and virtue that gave a new life to the people; those surpassing forms of dignity and splendour that suddenly rose up, as if by miracle, among the host, rushed to the front of the battle, and, as in the days of old, by their sole appearance turned the victory. But where was the symptom of a love for free government in the conduct of the ministry? The government of Portugal had been absolutely in their hands; had they disburthened it of its obstructions to freedom? had they pointed its aspect towards democracy? Then as if the cause had been rendered desperate because the British ministry had not introduced democratic principles into the governments of Spain and Portugal, he supported the opinion of his party, and maintained that it would be criminal to force a nation to a defence which might draw down ruin on them. But if we were to withdraw from the contest, it was possible for us to do so without degrading the country by any base avidity for little gains, by seizing upon any of those little pieces of plunder, which were so tempting, and apt to

overpower our resistance to the temptation. We might leave the country of our ally with the spirit of friendship and the purity of honour. It was of great moment to us, in even that meanest and lowest view of policy, to leave the people of the Peninsula our friends ; but we must be actuated by a higher principle, and be regretted and revered by those whom we were forced to abandon. He could not expect this from his majesty's ministers, and therefore could not think their hands fit to wield the resources, or sustain the character of the British empire." Lord Holland therefore voted for the amendment, the object of which was, that the cause of the Peninsula should be given up as hopeless.

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The debate was not less interesting in the Lower House, when Mr. Perceval moved for a sum not exceeding 980,000*l.* for the defence of Portugal ; " a vote," he said, " so consistent with the feelings which the house had professed on former occasions, that he should not have expected any opposition to it. He reminded the house how those who opposed it had been always of opinion that it was impossible for Spain to hold out so long ; that if she succeeded at all, she must succeed at once ; but that she could never maintain a protracted contest against the disciplined armies and enormous resources of France. This was their declared and recorded opinion ; but what was the fact ? Spain had continued the struggle. France might occupy the country with an army, but her power would be confined within the limits of her military posts, and it would require nearly as large an army to keep possession of it as to make the conquest. There never had existed a military power capable of subduing a population possessing the mind, and heart, and soul of the Spaniards. The very victories of their enemies would teach them discipline, and infuse into them a spirit which would ultimately be the ruin of their oppressors. Under these circumstances, would it be wise to abandon Portugal ? The last Austrian

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Mr. Perceval.

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war had arisen in great measure out of the contest in the Peninsula ; and during the progress of that war, however calamitous the result had proved, it would be in the recollection of the house, that one other day's successful resistance of the French by the Austrians might have overthrown the accumulated power of the enemy. Such events might again take place, for no man could anticipate, in the present state of the world, what might arise in the course of a short time ; but be that as it might, as long as the contest was, or could be, maintained in the Peninsula, the best policy of this country was to support it."

Sir J. Newport.

To this Sir John Newport replied, " if any question could provoke opposition, it must be that which would make them continue efforts in a cause which every one but the ministers considered hopeless. As for the recorded opinion of parliament, parliament was pledged to support the Spaniards while they were true to themselves ; but that they had been true to themselves he denied." Then assuming that the French must necessarily drive us out of Portugal, he asked what was to be done with the 30,000 Portuguese soldiers ? " Were they to be brought to this country, and added to the already enormous foreign army in its service ? or were they to be sent to Brazil ? or to be left fully equipped, and ready to add to the military force of Buonaparte ?" In the course of his speech Sir John Newport endeavoured to show that the Portuguese levies had not been expedited

Mr. Villiers

as they ought to have been. Mr. Villiers, who had been our minister in Portugal, made answer, " that the government there was administered with great vigour : large supplies of money had been raised to meet the public exigencies ; the old military constitution of the country had been restored ; the finances were ably administered and well collected ; and the war department conducted with energy and ability. If Spain," he said, " had done its duty equally with Portugal, in supporting the efforts of Great

Britain, its cause would already have triumphed, and there would not now have been a Frenchman upon the Spanish territory.”

Mr. Curwen said, “that as the Portuguese people had suffered a French army to overrun their country without any resistance, he was not for placing much reliance upon the Portuguese troops. If the enemy could point out what he would wish that we should undertake, his first wish would be that we should attempt to defend Portugal. Buonaparte,” he said, “could not receive more cheering hopes of ultimate success, than he would derive from learning that the present ministers were to continue in office, and that the House of Commons still persisted in placing a blind confidence in them, and enabling them to enter upon measures which, in their inevitable result, could not fail to answer all his purposes. The vote of the house this night, if it should decide against attempting the defence of Portugal, would be more important than if we were to take half the French army prisoners.”

Mr. Leslie Foster then rose, and his speech, in the spirit which it breathed, and the knowledge which it displayed, formed a singular contrast to the harangues of the opposition. “The present proposition of his majesty,” said he, “is partly connected with his past conduct towards the Peninsula; it is but a continuance and extension of the same spirit of British resistance. It is now, however, open to the reprehension of two classes of politicians; those who think we never ought to have committed ourselves for the salvation of Portugal and Spain; and those who, having approved of that committal while the event appeared doubtful, think that the overwhelming power of France has at length brought this tragedy so nearly to a close, that nothing is left for us, but to escape if possible from being sharers in its catastrophe. Hope, they contend, has vanished; there is no longer room for prediction; history has already re-

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Mr. Cur-
wen.

Mr. Leslie
Foster.

CHAP. corded, in letters of blood, the fate that awaits our perseverance.

XXIX. To me the aspect of the Peninsula appears an enigma, which it

1810. is no reflection on any ministers not perfectly to have under-

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stood ; a revolution bursting out at a period the least expected, exhibiting events in its progress the most singularly contradictory, and pregnant with results which I still think no man living can foresee. If, on the one hand, we are referred to the apathy of Galicia during the retreat of Sir John Moore, . . if we are desired to remember Ocaña and Tudela, and all the other defeats which the Spaniards have endured, and endured without despondency, . . must we not in candour remember that there was a battle of Baylen ? Are we to shut our eyes to the extraordinary phenomenon, that in Catalonia, the very next province to France, the French, at this hour, appear to be as often the besieged as the besiegers ? and can we forget Zaragoza and Gerona ? But above all, shall we not do justice to that singular obstinacy, to give it no more glorious a character, which has sustained their spirit under two hundred defeats, and which, in every period of the history of Spain, has formed its distinguishing characteristic ? The expulsion of the Moors was the fruit of seven centuries of fighting uninterrupted, and of 3600 battles, in many of which the Spaniards had been defeated. In the beaten but persevering Spaniards of these days we may trace the descendants of those warriors, as easily as we recognize the sons of the conquerors of Cressy and of Agincourt in the English who fought at Talavera. We may trace the same fortitude and patience, the same enthusiastic superstition, the same persevering insensibility of failure, and, I will add, the same absolute indifference as to liberty, constitution, or cortes, that distinguished the expellers of the Moors. Because we feel that freedom is the first of blessings, it is too much to say that other nations are to be raised in arms by no other motives than its influence. History should have taught

us, that there is another spirit prompting men to war, and which once poured all Europe forth in the Crusades ; and however we may pronounce on the motives of our ancestors, the fact we cannot deny, that the greatest spectacle of embattled nations ever exhibited on the theatre of war was under governments and systems which indeed were not worth the defending. I believe we may consider the inhabitants of the Peninsula, first, as a multitude of hardy and patient peasantry, buried in ignorance and superstition, and accustomed from their cradles, by the traditions and the songs of their ancestors, to consider the sword as the natural companion of the cross ; and almost inseparably to connect in idea the defence of their religion with the slaughter of their enemies ; and with these predispositions goaded into madness by ecclesiastics, as ignorant almost as their flocks ; but without an idea or a wish for freedom ; with *Fernando Settimo* in their mouths, as a watch-word, and fighting, if you will, for the continuance of the Inquisition. And with these qualifications it is my most firm conviction, that they would have overwhelmed all the armies of France, but that it was their misfortune to be cursed with a nobility in all respects the opposite of the peasantry, differing from them, not merely in their moral qualities, but even in their physical appearance ; a nobility of various degrees of worthlessness, but with a few brilliant exceptions, generally proportioned to the rank of their nobility ; and further cursed by a government (I speak not of their kings but of the Junta) both in its form and in its substance the most abominable that ever repressed or betrayed the energies of a nation ; hence desperate from repeated treason, destitute of confidence, not in themselves but in their commanders, unable to stand before the French in battle, but still more unable to abstain from fighting. One rare and unquestionable feature they presented, . . a nation that would fight with France ; and certain I am, that if we had not tried the

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CHAP. experiment of fighting by their side, these very men, who now
XXIX. most loudly condemn the course we have pursued, would be
1810. calling for the impeachment of these ministers, who had neg-
March. lected such glorious opportunities; who, in the crisis of the
fate of France, had shrunk from the only field where there was
a prospect of contending with success; who had coldly refused
our aid to the only allies who were ever worthy of British co-
operation. It is too much a habit to call for the fruits of our
battles, tacitly assuming that nothing but the absolute and com-
plete attainment of our object can justify having fought them. I
never can agree to measure the justification of a battle by the
mere fruits of victory! yet even on this ground I must contend,
that never were there laurels the more opposite of barren, than
those which have been reaped by our countrymen in Spain.
We, indeed, wanted not to be convinced that our army, like our
navy, equalled in science, and exceeded in courage, that of any
other nation in the world: but if we have any anxiety for our
character with other armies, if reputation is strength, and if the
reputation of a nation, as well as of an individual, consists not
in the estimation in which it holds itself, but in the estimation in
which it is held by others, is a false vanity that causes us to shut
our eyes and ears to the opinions of other nations. Spain at least
had been convinced by the exertions of her government, misre-
presenting our failure at Buenos Ayres, and other scenes of our
misfortunes, that Great Britain, omnipotent by sea, was even
ridiculous on land. So much so, that when the army of General
Spencer was landed near Cadiz, than which a finer army never
left the English shore, it was the wonder as well as the pity of
the Spaniards, that such noble-looking soldiers should be so ab-
solutely incapable of fighting. The 'beautiful' army was even
the emphatic denomination by which the British forces were
distinguished; and when Sir John Moore was known to be at

length on his march, that the beautiful army, the '*hermoso exercito*,' was actually advancing, was a subject of Spanish surprise, at least as much as of Spanish exultation; but when that army had commenced its retreat, old impressions were revived with tenfold force, '*hermoso*' was no longer the epithet bestowed on it, but one which it is impossible for me to repeat. Nor let it be said that Coruña was a full vindication of its fame! We indeed know that British heroism never shone more conspicuous than on that day; but the ray of glory which illuminated that last scene of our retreat, was but feebly reflected through the rest of Spain from that distant part of the Peninsula. The French returned in triumph to Madrid, and boasted that they had driven us into the sea; . . . it was certain we were no longer on the land; . . . and under such circumstances it is not surprising that Spain should have declined to have given to us all the credit which we really deserved. Some gentlemen, I see, are of opinion that it is no great matter what the Spaniards thought about us; but are we equally indifferent to the opinions of the French? Let us not too hastily conclude that they did full justice to our merits. We are told, indeed, that at Maida and in Egypt we had set that point at rest. Of Maida, I shall only say, that within the last month it has been, for the first time, mentioned in any newspaper of France, and that I believe nine-tenths of the French soldiers have never heard either of the battle, or of the existence of such a place; and as to Egypt, their opinion is universally that which General Regnier, in his most able, but untrue representation, of those events, has laboured to impress, namely, that the treachery of Menou, and the detestation in which the army held the service in Egypt, and their anxiety to return to France, were the real causes of their expulsion; and that an overwhelming force of ninety thousand men, of English, Turks, and Indians, which he says, and which they believe, we

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CHAP. brought against them, furnished a decent excuse for their sur-
 XXIX. render. Let us remember too, that it was after these proofs of
 1810. British military excellence, that Buonaparte, on the heights of
March. Boulogne, parcelled out in promise to his soldiers the estates of
 the '*nation boutiquiere*:' let us remember also our own opinions in
 those days, how general engagements were to be avoided;... how
 a system of bush-fighting was to be adopted in Kent;... and our
 hopes that England might be saved after London might be lost,
 ... or what inundations we should make to protect it. Such lan-
 guage was then termed '*caution*:' but on the proud eminence on
 which we are now placed, we may afford to acknowledge there
 was in it some mixture of distrust in the good old bayonet of
 Britain. Where are the promises of Buonaparte now? The very
 ridicule of such assertions would render it impossible for him to
 repeat them. It is these guilty ministers who have taught to
 him, and what I think of much more consequence, have taught
 to England, another style of conversation. They have fairly
 tried that point, so carefully avoided by their predecessors; they
 have brought our armies to a meeting with the finest armies of
 France; and have added more to our strength, as well as to our
 glory, by fighting in Spain, than their predecessors by abstain-
 ing from it in Poland. . . Such is the view which I take of what
 is past: With respect to the second point, whether the time is
 indeed come, when our further assistance can only be destruction
 to ourselves, without being serviceable to our allies, a very little
 time must show us that; and if there are indeed good grounds
 of hope, any premature expression of our despondency will cer-
 tainly extinguish them. The Junta is at length demolished.
 The French are again dispersed over every part of the Pen-
 insula; the people are still every where in arms. Let us not
 damp that spirit which may effect much, and which must effect
 something, ... which must at least give long employment to the

forces of our enemy. If, indeed, it depended solely upon us, whether our allies should continue that sacrifice of blood which they have so profusely shed, I should not think us justifiable in purchasing our quiet at such a price: but convinced as I am, that whether we stand by them, or forsake them, those gallant nations will still continue to bleed at every pore, our assistance assumes a new character; and independent of the advantages to be derived to ourselves, . . . independent of 200,000 Frenchmen already fallen, . . . independent of not less than 300,000 more required even to preserve existence in the Peninsula, . . . independent of Brazil and South America, for ever severed from our enemies, . . . and independent of the fleets of the Peninsula, I trust, rescued from their grasp, . . . independent of these gains to ourselves, there is another feeling binding upon a nation, as well as upon an individual, not to forsake our friend because he is in his greatest danger! . . . Still, however, I acknowledge a limit there must be, beyond which we cannot go, and whenever we can agree in declaring that

Funditus occidimus neque habet Fortuna regressum,

then, indeed, the first laws of self-preservation will call on us to discontinue the contest. But surely Great Britain will not utter such a sentiment until her allies shall be disposed to join in it. They do not despair, and I will never despair of them so long as they do not despair of themselves, . . . so long as I should leave it in their power to say to us at a future day, ‘Whence these chains? . . . If you had stood firm a little longer, . . . if you had not so soon fainted, . . . we should not at this day be in the power of our enemies!’”

General Ferguson was the first person who rose after Mr. Leslie Foster had concluded this able and manly speech. “He had been in Portugal,” he said, and “he did not think there were

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*General
Ferguson.*

CHAP. 30,000 soldiers in that country; those that were there had cer-
 XXIX. tainly, through the exertions of General Beresford and other Bri-
 1810. tish officers, attained an appearance of discipline: but he feared
 March. that an army adequate to the task of defending Portugal must
 be able to make a stand in the first instance; and if obliged to
 retreat, must still, as opportunity offered, return to the charge;
 and thus make resistance after resistance. Now he was decidedly
 of opinion, from what he had seen and heard of them, that on
 the very first defeat the little discipline of the Portuguese army
 would vanish, and a dispersion be the consequence."

*Mr. Fitz-
gerald.*

Mr. Fitzgerald asked whether ministers had employed trans-
 ports to bring away our cavalry from Portugal? in this service,
 he said, our money would be best employed. He had never
 heard of any achievement performed by the Portuguese, except,
 indeed, that 2000 of them, with the Bishop of Porto at their head,
 had entered Porto, and taken twenty-four Frenchmen prisoners.

*Lord Mil-
ton.*

Lord Milton repeated the erroneous proposition of the Marquis
 of Lansdowne, that it was highly improper to act as principals
 in a foreign country, instead of as auxiliaries. "No reasonable
 man," he affirmed, "could vote a million of the public money
 for such a purpose, when the French were under the walls of
 Cadiz. It had often been the practice to subsidize foreign
 troops, but he believed it had never before entered the head of
 any English statesman to grant subsidies to the Portuguese, . . . to
 those, in fact, among whom the materials for an army could not
 be found."

Mr. Bankes

Mr. Bankes talked of the money: "We had it not
 to spare, and if we had, even then we ought not to spare it. Too
 much had already been furnished to the Spaniards. Where were
 we to find more? specie we had not, and paper would not an-
 swer. The enemy were now perhaps in possession of Cadiz,
 which had escaped immediate capture only through an accident.
 The Cortes had not even a town in Spain to meet in. It was

quite romantic to expect that a British army, of 20,000 or 25,000 men, even with whatever co-operation Portugal could give, would be able to maintain the war there as a principal against France. He must oppose the motion, and recommend that the resources of the country should be husbanded for our defence."

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Upon this, Mr. Jacob, who had recently returned from Spain, denied that France had any complete occupation of that country, either civil or military. In Catalonia, he said, it would be difficult to say, whether there were at that moment more Spanish towns besieged by the French, or towns occupied by French troops besieged by the Spaniards; and the communications were so completely cut off, that the French could not send a letter from Barcelona to Gerona, without an escort of at least 500 cavalry to protect it. Generally speaking, throughout the whole of Spain, those towns only were surrendered which were under the influence of the nobility and gentry of large estates; but the mass of the people were patriotic, and the villages were defended after the towns had been betrayed. And not only the villages, but the mountains, were still obstinately defended. He believed, that among the nobility and gentry, where there were two brothers, the man of great possessions was always for submitting to the enemy, while the other joined the patriotic standard. We had been accustomed to consider civil wars as the most horrible of all kinds of hostilities, but never was any civil war so horrible as that which was now raging in Spain. The massacre, the pillage, and the violence offered to women, were unparalleled. He had lately been witness to some of these atrocities. The town of Puerto Real had surrendered upon terms, and Victor, upon entering it, published a proclamation, promising the most perfect security to all the inhabitants. Nevertheless, he had hardly taken possession before he ordered the men, who were mostly artificers at

Mr. Jacob.

CHAP. the docks in Cadiz, to be imprisoned, and the females were
XXIX. marched down to St. Mary's, to be violated by his army.

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Mr. Whitbread.

It might have been thought that such a statement as this could have produced but one effect, or at least that no man could have been found who would attempt to weaken its effect, by recriminating upon his own country. Mr. Whitbread, however, after observing that he believed Mr. Jacob had gone to Spain upon a mission, half commercial, half diplomatic, demanded of him whether he had been an eye-witness of these atrocities ; and if he were, or if he were not, why he had detailed them, unless it was to inflame the house upon a question where their judgement only ought to decide ? “ Abuses, no doubt,” he said, “ must have prevailed ; but were gentlemen aware of none committed under circumstances of less provocation, when the clergy received the mandates of power to ascend their pulpits, and issue from them falsehoods not more rank than they were notorious ? ” Such is the language which Mr. Whitbread is reported to have uttered upon this occasion. He proceeded to ask, “ Where was the spirit of the Spaniards ? where were its effects ? were they seen in suffering the French to pass over the face of their country, like light through an unresisting medium ? We were gravely told that the post could not pass unmolested ; no doubt this was a most serious calamity, and a conclusive proof of the energy of the popular spirit, . . only, unfortunately, we had the same proof in Ireland ! Spain,” he averred, “ had not done its duty . . no matter from what cause ; the people had, however, some excuse, they had been under the selfish sway of an aristocracy, that only wanted to use them as an instrument for effecting their own narrow purposes ; their implicit confidence had been abused by the blind bigotry of an intolerant priesthood, . . a priesthood, that whatever it preached, practised not the gospel ;

they had had the sword in their hands as often as the crosier, and they had had, he feared, in their hearts any thing but the meekness, humility, charity, and peace, that their blessed master had inculcated by his pure precepts, enforced by the example of his spotless life, and sealed by the last sufferings of his all-atonement death. While," said Mr. Whitbread, "I value those precepts and that example, I never can take pleasure in setting man against his fellow-man in a hopeless struggle. I think the present cause hopeless, and as such I never will consent to its being uselessly and cruelly protracted."

Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Bathurst spoke like men in whom the principle of opposition was not the pole star of their political course. The question, Mr. Huskisson said, was, whether we were to withhold from his majesty's ministers the means by which the contest might be rendered more likely to be successful. Mr. Bathurst said, it was enough for him to know that an alliance with Portugal had been concluded, and that Portugal, in virtue of that alliance, demanded our assistance. An amendment was moved by Mr. Tierney, tending to refuse the grant, and 142 members voted for it, over whom ministers had a majority of sixty-two. In the Lords, the numbers had been 94, and 124.

To comment upon the language of the opposition in these debates would be superfluous. The ignorance which they displayed of the national character of the Spaniards and Portuguese, and of the nature of the seat of war, the contemptuous superiority which they assumed, and the tone in which they ridiculed and reviled our allies, were of little moment; but the debate was of main importance, because the party committed themselves completely upon the defence of Portugal, declaring, in the most confident and positive terms, that it was hopeless, and ought not to be attempted. Their journalists took up the subject in the same

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Mr. Hus-
kisson.

Mr. Bath-
urst.

CHAP. strain, and followed the unhappy pattern of prediction which had
 XXIX. been set them. One of two things, they said, must necessarily
 1810. happen to these 30,000 Portugueze troops ; either they must fall
 into the hands of the French, or we must bring them out of Portugal. The possibility that, with a British army, they might be able successfully to defend their country, these men had neither wisdom, nor knowledge, nor virtue to contemplate. Could it be doubted for a moment, they said, that Spain would be subdued, from one extremity to the other, before the end of six months ? They copied, too, as faithfully, the false and slanderous representations which were made of the Portugueze. A thousand Portugueze, they said, would fly before a single French company, just as so many gipsies would run away from a constable. We might raise a better legion in Norwood. Was there an English colonel who would give five shillings a dozen for such recruits, or a serjeant who would be at the expense of a bowl of punch for fourscore of them ? . . . The French and their partizans did not fail to make due use of what was thus advanced in their favour ; but the Portugueze were too well acquainted with the real character and feelings of this nation to have their faith in British friendship shaken by the gross misrepresentations of a virulent party : and they knew, perhaps, that statesmen who take part against the government and against the allies of their country, and writers who pervert to the most wicked and perilous purposes the freedom of the press, are the concomitant evils of a free constitution like ours, under which both public and private libellers breed like vermin in a genial climate.

*Reform of
 the Portu-
 gueze army*

Meantime the Portugueze army, which, under a system of complicated abuses, had been reduced to the lowest possible state of degradation, was reformed in all its branches by the indefatigable exertions of Marshal Beresford. He had to contend not only with the inveterate evils which had grown up during

the long perversion of government, but with that spirit of insubordination which, at the outbreak of these troubles, the general anarchy had produced. The soldiers had begun to claim and exert the power of choosing their own officers; an end was immediately put to this ruinous license, and at the same time means were taken for removing the cause of complaint wherever it had originated, by recalling the officers as well as the men to a sense of their duty, and by introducing British officers in sufficient number to give the army consistence and effect till they might gradually be replaced by native Portuguese. Equal justice, which in that country had been as little known as liberty of conscience, was promised and administered; the troops were told that the Marshal was at all times ready to hear their complaints, through the proper channel; and that if any officer excused himself from forwarding the complaint of a soldier, the soldier might address it directly to the commander-in-chief. But the Marshal said it was his duty to be impartial, and the officers had as much right to justice as the soldiers. Severe penalties had been denounced against desertion, but with so little effect, that nearly seven hundred cases occurred during the month of April in this year; the punishment of death was then inflicted on one offender, and two others were degraded to Angola. At the same time the officers were not allowed to absent themselves from their duty under pretext of illness; certificates to this effect had been so greatly abused, that they were no longer to be regarded without such actual inspection as the Marshal might appoint; and one person of high family was dismissed the service for a subterfuge of this kind. Courts-martial were made to understand their proper functions by being reprimanded in general orders; and the *Misericordia* which had interfered to suspend the execution of an officer who had received money from the French, and en-

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CHAP. tered their service, was informed that its privileges did not ex-
XXIX. tend to these cases, and that the sentence must be carried into
1810. effect.

It was necessary to raise the military character in the opinion of the soldiers themselves, as well as of the nation. But before this could be done, the sense of cleanliness and decency was to be restored: for the troops, in that sullen state of self-neglect which discomfort and hopelessness produce, had well-nigh lost all sense of either. The Commander-in-chief told them that many of the evils which the army suffered were occasioned by the want of cleanliness; that health could not be preserved without it, that the soldiers must wash themselves frequently, and that it grieved him to say, he must require the officers to set them an example; that fatigue was no excuse for neglecting this essential duty, for after a long march nothing was so refreshing; that every officer must be responsible for the cleanliness of the men under his command, and that he himself would never excuse any officer whom he should see dirty. He gave orders that the men should be provided with soap, brushes, and combs; that they should brush their clothes and clean their shoes every day, and be punished if they neglected this; and as the summer approached, he required the officers, whenever an opportunity occurred, to make the men bathe by companies. The Portuguese soldiers, it was said, like those of every other country, desired to appear with a military air, and with that propriety which belongs to the military character, and the men who most affected this appearance were always the best soldiers; it was the business of the officers, therefore, to see that they were provided with every thing necessary for maintaining it. While this indispensable attention to cleanliness was exacted, every possible provision was made both for their

health* and comfort. A dispensation was obtained from the Pope's Legate, allowing the troops the use of meat while on service, every day in the year, except on Ash-Wednesday and Good-Friday. The huge regimental kettles, which, after the Mahomedan custom, were still used in the Portuguese army, and which, from the inconvenience of carrying them, frequently did not come up with the troops till long after they were wanted, were laid aside, and light tin vessels substituted, which might be always at hand. An injurious custom of marching in their cloaks when it rained, and even using the blanket at such times as an additional covering, was prohibited; the men, they were told, knew by experience, that no clothing could protect them against the rain during a wet march, and therefore they were ordered to keep cloak and blanket dry for their own comfort when they reached the journey's end. The officers and non-commissioned officers were in the habit of kicking and striking the soldiers; wherever British officers commanded this was immediately forbidden, and their example, with the decided opinion of Marshal Beresford, nearly, or altogether, put a stop to the unmanly practice. The ordinary punishment, though less disgraceful and severe than the abominable system of flogging, proved more frequently fatal; it consisted in striking the soldier on the back, across the shoulders, with the broad side of a sword. The number of strokes, or *pancadas*, never exceeded fifty; but men have not unfrequently been known to drop down dead after receiving thirty, from a rupture of the aorta. Marshal Beresford ordered

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* The prejudice against mercury prevailed so strongly among the native practitioners, that the Commander-in-chief, at a time when syphilitic diseases were thinning the ranks, found it necessary to enforce its use in the army and in all the military hospitals.

CHAP. a small cane to be used instead of the sword ; and thus, without
XXIX. altering the national manner of punishment, rendered it no
1810. longer dangerous.

There were other evils which were beyond his power. When the troops of the line were recruited, it was neither done by ballot nor by bounty : a certain number were demanded from each district ; the captain of that district picked whom he chose, sent them to prison till he had collected the whole number, then marched them to join their regiment. The Marshal introduced the easy improvement of sending them to a recruiting depot, to be drilled before they joined ; but he fixed upon the peninsula of Peniche, a swampy and unwholesome spot, which proved fatal to many, acting with double effect upon the depressed, half-starved, and ill-treated peasants, who were sent thither. The sick, the lame, and the lazy, were crowded into the same dungeon when recruited by the Capitam Mor ; contagion was thus generated, and very often those, and those especially, who were fit for the service, were carried off by disease. The depot was afterwards removed to Mafra, which is a healthy situation.

Over the method of levying troops Marshal Beresford had no controul. But the hospitals, which were infinitely more destructive to the army than the sword of the enemy, and would have destroyed it much faster than it could have been recruited, were greatly improved under a British inspector, though the government would not permit his regulations to be carried into effect to their full extent. Still a great and material improvement was accomplished. The commissariat had been so conducted, as to be at once inefficient for the army, and oppressive for the people. A board of administration at Lisbon had its intendants in every province, and its factors in every town. Government

contracted for provisions and forage, at fixed prices, with the board, and the board directed its agents to purchase what might be required for the troops on the spot. Payment was made by bills upon the board, which in the best times were seldom taken up till twelve months after they became due, and in the present state of things were considered to be worth nothing. The farmer, therefore, naturally concealed his grain; it was seldom that magazines were formed, or any provision made against scarcity; and what the farmer could not or would not sell at the disadvantageous rate which the factors offered was usually taken, when it could be found, by force. Marshal Beresford got commissaries appointed to the different brigades, but he could not get money for them, and therefore they were of little use. To reform the civil establishments of the army was almost as difficult as it would have been to reform the government; the utmost exertions of the Marshal, aided as they were by Lord Wellington's interference, availed nothing, . . . being opposed by every species of low cunning and court intrigue. For the old corruptions existed in full vigour, notwithstanding the removal of the court to Brazil; and the body politic continued to suffer under its inveterate disease, a *morbus pediculosus*, from which nothing but a system of reform, wisely, temperately, firmly, and constitutionally pursued, could purify it, and restore it to health and strength.

Much, however, was done for Portugal, . . . enough to be ever remembered by that country with gratitude, and by Great Britain with a generous and ennobling pride. An English commissariat, scrupulously exact in all its dealings, relieved the farmers in great measure from the oppression of their own government. The soldiers learnt to respect their officers and themselves; they rapidly improved in discipline; they acquired con-

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fidence, and became proud of their profession. The government itself found it necessary to alter its old system of secrecy and delusion; the dispatches of Lord Wellington and Marshal Beresford were published in the Lisbon Gazette, and the people of Portugal were officially informed of the real circumstances of the war, as fairly and as fully as they had been in the War of the Acclamation.

CHAPTER XXX.

SIEGE OF HOSTALRICH. ATTEMPT UPON VALENCIA. CAPTURE
OF LERIDA. OPERATIONS BEFORE CADIZ.

IF proof had been wanting that men of any country may be made good soldiers under good discipline, it might have been seen at this time in Buonaparte's armies, where the Italians, who in their own country ran like sheep before the French, were now embodied with them, and approved themselves in every respect equal to their former conquerors. These men, who were taken by the conscription to bear part in a war wherein they had no concern, who had no national character to support, nothing but the spirit of their profession to animate them, were nevertheless equal to any service required from them, and needed no other excitement than that they were fighting for pay, and plunder, and life. Was it then to be doubted, that if the same care were bestowed in training, the same results would be seen in the Spaniards and Portugeze, who were under the influence of every passion and every principle which can strengthen and elevate the heart of man, . . . both people too being alike remarkable for national feeling, and for patience under difficulties and privations, docility to their superiors, and faithful attachment to those in whom they trust? It was not indeed to be expected that the Spaniards would so far acknowledge their military degradation as to put themselves under the tuition of an ally; Spain had not abated sufficiently of its old pretensions, thus to humiliate itself. Neither indeed was that degradation so com- 1810.

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plete as it had been in Portugal. The Spanish artillery was most respectable; and there were officers in the army who had studied their profession, and whose talents might have raised them to distinction in the proudest age of Spanish history. But the Portuguese were conscious of their weakness, and in this knowledge they found their strength: for when that brave and generous people, in the extremity of their fortune, submitted implicitly to the direction of their old hereditary ally, . . . when they offered hands and hearts for the common cause, and asked for assistance and instruction, the ultimate success of that cause became as certain as any thing can possibly be deemed by human foresight. With Portugal for the scene of action, and her population ready for every sacrifice that duty might require, it remained only for Great Britain to feel and understand its own strength, and employ its inexhaustible resources in exertions adequate to the occasion.

But Great Britain as yet hardly understood its strength. The cold poison which was continually instilled by party writers into the public ear had produced some effect even upon the sound part of the nation. From the commencement of the war it had been proclaimed as a truth too certain to be disputed, that England could no longer as a military power compete with France, consequently that we must rely upon our insular situation, and husband our resources. These opinions had been so long repeated, that they had acquired something like the authority of prescription; the government itself seemed to distrust the national power, and in the fear of hazarding too much, apportioned always for every service the smallest possible force that could be supposed adequate to the object, instead of placing at the general's disposal such ample means as might ensure success. The first departure from this over-cautious system was in the expedition to Walcheren, where a great armament was worse

than wasted. That miserable enterprise weakened the government, and in some degree disheartened it; and Lord Wellington, in addition to the other difficulties of his situation, had long to struggle with insufficient means. But the exertions and the experience of the last year had not been lost: the British army had acquired a reputation which, however successfully Buonaparte concealed it from the French people, was felt by his soldiers and his generals: time had been gained for training the Portuguese troops, and preparing for the defence of Portugal; and the British Commander having proved both his enemies and his allies, had clearly foreseen the course which the war would take, and determined upon his own measures with the calmness of a mind that knew how to make the best advantage of the events it could not controul.

While both parties were preparing for a campaign in Portugal, in which the enemy expected to complete the conquest of the Peninsula, and Lord Wellington felt assured that the tide of their fortune would be turned; while the war before Cadiz was pursued with little exertion or enterprise on either side, and the cities of Andalusia were occupied without a struggle by the invaders; in Catalonia the contest was carried on with renewed vigour. The fall of Gerona enabled the besieging army to undertake farther operations; but the Catalans, as well as the French, had changed their commander. Upon Blake's recall to the south, D. Juan de Henestrosa had succeeded to the command; the provincial Junta, however, in accord with the general wish of the people and of the troops, appointed O'Donnell in his stead, and this nomination was confirmed by the Regency. It gave offence to Garcia Conde, who was an older officer, and had also distinguished himself during the siege of Gerona. He resigned the command of the first division in disgust: this act of intemperance, however, was overlooked, and he was made go-

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*O'Donnell
appointed to
the com-
mand in
Catalonia.*

*Garcia
Conde made
governor of
Lerida.*

*Von Staff,
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vernor of Lerida, a post of great importance at that time, but to which his services and his character seemed fairly to entitle him. The Duque del Parque had more reason for displeasure at O'Donnell's promotion; in the belief that he was to have the command in Catalonia by the express desire of the Catalan people, he had taken leave of his own army, and Romana had been appointed to succeed him.

Rapid promotion in the Spanish armies.

If heroes who carry victory with their single presence were to be produced as if by miracle, according to Lord Holland's supposition, by democratic institutions, during such struggles as that in which the Spaniards were engaged, fairer opportunities for their appearance could not have been afforded under the most democratic forms than were given both by the Central Junta and by the Regency. There had been a flagrant exception in the case of Alburquerque; the union of high rank, deserved popularity, and great military talents in his person, had excited unworthy jealousies in some, and worse passions in others: but in every other instance, promotion had rapidly followed upon desert; a rash and even ruinous confidence had been shown where any promise of ability appeared; and men were raised so rapidly, that they became giddy with their sudden elevation. But Henrique O'Donnell justified the expectations which had been formed of him. While the French proclaimed in their official accounts, that now Gerona had been taken, little more was required for the complete subjugation of Catalonia; that the Ampurdam was already reduced; that the peasants, as they were taken in arms, were hung up in great numbers upon the trees along the road side, and that the French communications had at length been rendered secure; the fall of Gerona, like that of Zaragoza, had animated the Spaniards, not discouraged them: they looked to the spirit which the garrison and the inhabitants had displayed, not to the surrender which famine had rendered

inevitable, and in the religious and heroic endurance which had there been manifested, found cause for more ennobling pride and surer hope than a victory in the field would have given them. Eroles was charged by the superior Junta to enforce the decree for embodying every fifth man. He called upon the Catalans in language suited to the times, reminding them of their forefathers who spread terror through the Greek empire; and referring to those regiments of the Gerona garrison, which but a little while before the siege had been filled up with men thus levied, as having exemplified not less illustriously the powerful effects of discipline. By this means the army was recruited, and the men hoping for change of fortune with every change of commander, entered cheerfully upon the service under O'Donnell, who had hitherto only been known by his adventurous exploits and his success.

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In the other parts of Spain, grievously as all had suffered, the scene of action had frequently been shifted; but in Catalonia there had been no intermission. From the commencement till the termination of the war, the struggle was carried on there without an interval of rest. A memorable instance of the provincial spirit was given at this time by the people of Villadrau, an open town, in the plain of Vich; on the approach of an enemy's detachment, which they had no means of resisting, the whole of its inhabitants, in the middle of February, retired to the mountains. The French Commandant, finding the place utterly deserted, wrote to the Regidor, telling him that if the inhabitants were not brought back by the following day, he should be obliged to report their conduct to Marshal Augereau, and take the necessary measures for reducing them to obedience: at the same time he assured him that the most effectual means should be used for preserving order. This answer was returned by the Regidor: "All these people, that the French nation may

*Conduct of
the people of
Villadrau.*

CHAP. know the love they bear to their religion, their King, and their
 XXX. country, are contented to remain buried among the snows of Mont-
 1810. sen, rather than submit to the hateful dominion of the French
 troops." So many families, in the same spirit, forsook their
 homes, rather than remain subject to the invaders, that the
 superior Junta, at O'Donnell's suggestion, issued an order for
 providing them with quarters in the same manner as the soldiers.
 The exceptions to this spirit were found, where they were to be
 expected, in the rich commercial towns, as at Reus. If the
 people of Barcelona, like those of Villadrau, and of so many
 smaller places, had abandoned their houses, that city could not
 long have been held by the enemy; in that case the blockade
 might have been as rigorous, and almost as effectual by land
 as by sea: but provisions for the use of the inhabitants were
 allowed by the Spanish generals to enter; and therefore, though
 the French might be sometimes inconvenienced, it was certain that
 they would never be exposed to any serious danger of famine.

Hostalrich. The communication between Gerona and that city was im-
 peded by Hostalrich, a modern fortress, overlooking a small and
 decayed town, which had once been fortified. It is situated
 on high and broken ground, seven leagues from Gerona. The
 intermediate country is of the wildest character, consisting of
 mountains covered with pines; the road winds through sundry
 defiles, so narrow, that in most places the river nearly fills up
 the way; the pass is so difficult, that in one part it has obtained
 the name of El Purgatorio; and the outlet is commanded by
 this fortress. Part of the town had been burnt during the siege
 of Gerona, when the magazines which had been collected there
 were taken by the enemy. An enemy's division, under the
 Italian General Mazzuchelli, occupied it now, preparatory to the
 siege of the castle; the inhabitants, upon their approach, took
 refuge in the church, and there defended themselves till a de-

tachment of the garrison sallied, and relieved them; and before the blockade of the fortress was pressed, they had time to remove and seek shelter where they could. The garrison meantime prepared for a Spanish defence. This fortress, said the governor Julian de Estrada, is the daughter of Gerona, and ought to imitate the example of its mother!

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The siege began on the 13th of January: a week afterwards one of the outworks, called the Friars' Tower, was attacked; the officer in command, D. Francisco Oliver, was killed by a hand-grenade, which exploded as he was in the act of throwing it; and the man who succeeded him, immediately, either through cowardice, or from a worse motive, surrendered his post. Augereau, who was at this time come to inspect the siege and accelerate the operations, thought it a good opportunity to intimidate the governor. He therefore summoned him to surrender, saying, that the garrison should in that case be allowed the honours of war, and marched as prisoners into France; giving them two hours to reply, and warning them that if they refused to submit upon this summons, they must not expect to be treated like soldiers, but should suffer capital punishment, as men taken in rebellion against their lawful king. Estrada replied, that the Spaniards had no other king than Ferdinand VII. The siege was carried on with little vigour till the 20th of February, when the French began to bombard the fort; but the men who defended it showed themselves worthy of the cause in which they were engaged, and of their commander; and here, as at Gerona, the French, with all their skill, and all their numbers, found that the strength of a fortress depends less upon its walls and bulwarks, than upon the virtue of those who defend it.

Commencement of the siege.

The force under Augereau's command was sufficiently large for carrying on the siege of Hostalrich, commencing operations against Lerida, and acting at the same time against O'Donnell,

First success of O'Donnell.

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*Desertion
from the
French
army.*

whose troops the French Marshal despised, as consisting merely of raw levies. He was soon taught to respect them and their General; for when he himself went to Barcelona with a considerable convoy of stores, and 1500 of the garrison were sent to occupy O'Donnell's attention, not a fifth part of the number effected their retreat into the city. More than 500 of the French were slain, and nearly as many taken prisoners. They suffered a greater loss from desertion. Buonaparte had pursued the wicked policy of forcing into his own service the Austrian prisoners taken in the late war; 800 of these men went over to the Spaniards in a body, stipulating only that they might keep their arms, and remain together, till they should be distributed among the regiments of the line. General Doyle had addressed proclamations to the soldiers in the French service, not only in the French and Spanish languages, but in Italian, Dutch, German, and Polish also, setting before them the real cause of a war, the nature of which they saw and felt. The Catalans too had learnt the good policy of distinguishing between the French and the foreigners in the French army, treating the latter, when they were taken, with kindness, as men who had been brought against them by compulsion. The effect of this system, and of the proclamations, was such as greatly to alarm the enemy. They lost in this manner more than 6000 men, wretched as the service was to which the men went over. It was not possible for them to take any effectual means for checking this evil, when such constant opportunities were offered in the desultory warfare which they were compelled to carry on.

*Want of
concert be-
tween the
provinces.*

Had the Spanish army been even in a tolerable condition, this cause must have produced the ruin of the French in Catalonia; but the deserters found that they were exchanging a bad service for a worse. The French troops, though by a policy not less ruinous than detestable, left to supply themselves as they

could, were, even at the worst, better provided than the Spaniards in their best state. They had always the benefit of system, regularity, and order; while the Spaniards suffered as much from the confusion which insubordination and the total want of method occasioned, as from neglect on the part of the local authorities and the provincial government. Owing to these combined causes their armies were often in a state of destitution. Unanimous as Spain was in its feeling of indignant abhorrence at the insolent usurpation which Buonaparte had attempted, it was divided against itself whenever provincial interests appeared to clash. Neither Catalonia nor Valencia would at this time make common cause with Arragon, although they were engaged with the same passionate feeling, for the same object, against the same enemy, and although their own safety was immediately involved in the fate of that kingdom. The Arragonese army consisted of about 13,000 men in three divisions, one of which was near Teruel, another near Tortosa, and the third on the line of the Cinca; the men were without pay, without arms, without clothing; the officers on a fourth part of their appointments. Twenty thousand men would eagerly have joined that army, if they could have been armed and fed; the people had given abundant proof of their zeal, and spirit, and devotion, and the army had done its duty: yet Valencia would spare them none of its own ample resources, and the Catalan government even stopped the supplies which were intended for Arragon. The Arragonese felt this the more indignantly, because while Lazan was at their head, his rank and influence ensured some attention to his representations on their behalf; but Lazan, whether or not justly, had been arrested, as being implicated in the intrigues of Montijo and D. Francisco Palafox, and was kept a close prisoner in Peñiscola. The judge who officially inquired into his conduct declared that there was not the slightest proof against

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CHAP. him; and upon the overthrow of the Central Junta, Saavedra
 XXX. dispatched an order for his liberation; but the Junta of Va-
 1810. lencia, with that order in their hands, detained him in strict con-
 February. finement.

*Neglect of
 the Valen-
 cian go-
 vernment.*

No province had as yet suffered so little as Valencia; the people were proud of the spirit and signal success with which they had repelled Marshal Moncey from the walls of their capital; their country was the most fertile and most populous part of Spain; men were in abundance, wealth was not wanting, and there were more appearances of activity and preparation than were any where else to be seen. In every town and village militia and guerilla bands were formed; about 50,000 were thus embodied, the greater part armed with fire-arms; and besides these there were 11,000 troops of the line; but with this force nothing was undertaken. Good service might have been rendered on one side by harassing the enemy's communications in La Mancha; and scenes of more important action were open both in Arragon and Catalonia, . . . even on their own borders; but the will, courage, and means were inefficient, for want of capacity in their leaders. They waited for the enemy upon their own ground, in hope and in confidence, but without foresight or system. General Doyle endeavoured to convince the provincial government that no time should be lost in fortifying the important points of Morella, Oropesa, and Murviedro. He inferred from some of Suchet's movements an intention to establish himself in the latter place, which would have cut off the communication between Catalonia and the rest of Spain, and have given him command of the Huerta de Valencia, and of the whole country to the very gates of Tortosa. But in the confidence and confusion which prevailed alike in the people and in the officers and the rulers, nothing was done; and so far were they from storing Tarragona, and forming a depot at Peñiscola, as

the importance of the crisis required, that Tortosa itself had not at this time provisions for a week's consumption. They relied upon the defence of their frontier, upon their own numbers and resources, upon fortune and Providence; for themselves, they were ready to meet the danger manfully whenever it should come, . . . but as for any system of defence, to fortune and Providence that seemed to be left.

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The Valencians were in this state when the half-armed, half-clothed, half-hungered Arragonese, with whom their abundant means ought to have been shared, were dispersed, and the frontier in consequence was left open. General Caro determined to march upon Teruel, which the French had entered, but the movements of an active enemy soon compelled him to change this determination. One division of Suchet's army advanced from Alcañiz upon Morella; no means had been taken for strengthening that important point, the Valencians therefore fell back from thence, and from San Mateo also, and the enemy, without experiencing any opposition, proceeded by Burriol with all speed toward Murviedro. Meantime Suchet with the other division advanced upon the same point by way of Alventosa; there he encountered a brave resistance from the vanguard of Caro's army, and after a contest, which lasted nearly the whole day, was repulsed. The Spanish commander, expecting a renewal of the attack, requested a reinforcement from Segorbe; he was informed in reply, that General Caro had ordered the troops to fall back upon the capital. This disheartened men who were too prone to interpret an order for retreating as a signal for flight; they dispersed upon the next attack, leaving the artillery upon the ground; Segorbe was entered in pursuit, and Suchet, having sacked that place, effected a junction with the other division of his army at Murviedro.

*The force
on the Va-
lencian
frontier
dispersed.*

His corps consisted of about 12,000 men, with thirty field-

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*March.**Suchet advances against Valencia.**March 6.*

pieces ; a force manifestly insufficient for its object, if he had not counted upon the success of his machinations in the capital. From thence he advanced to the Puig, and having fixed his headquarters on the spot where King Jayme el Conquistador had encamped when he undertook the conquest of Valencia, he addressed a letter to the Captain General Caro, saying, that he came not to make war upon the happy capital of the finest kingdom in Spain, nor to lay waste the delicious country which surrounded it, but to offer protection and peace, such as Jaen, and Granada, and Cordoba, and Seville were enjoying. Andalusia had submitted ; the army, having discharged its duty, had entered into the service of King Joseph Napoleon ; and the militia, consisting of men enlisted by force, and under the penalty of death if they refused, had been dismissed. Religion was respected, justice observed, private property untouched ; and General Caro was now invited to open the gates of Valencia, that the French might enter, and he might deserve the blessings of his country. Wherefore should he prolong a contest, the issue of which the Spaniards themselves could now no longer consider doubtful ? They had done enough to prove their courage, and it was time that their sufferings should have an end. The Captain General's answer contained some stinging truths, and some remarkable falsehoods. It contrasted the professions of General Suchet with his actual conduct ; and it assured him that the French had been completely defeated between Puerto Real and the Isle of Leon, that they had evacuated Seville in consequence, and were in full retreat toward the Sierra Morena. Authentic intelligence was so irregularly communicated, and the most extravagant reports so eagerly propagated and so readily believed, that it is very possible the Captain General of Valencia believed the incredible statement which he advanced. Suchet addressed a summons also to the inhabitants of Valencia, calling upon

them as proprietors and parents to consult their own interest and their duty, by preserving their beautiful and flourishing city from the calamities of war. They returned for answer, that they were prepared to sacrifice every thing in the defence of their just cause; that having defeated Moncey in a similar attempt, they had good reason now to hope for the same success; and that it was for his Excellency, who so humanely deprecated the effusion of blood, to consider whether the best method of avoiding that evil was not to abstain from an attack?

Suchet, in fact, had no intention of making one. It was, however, expected by the Valencians; and in that expectation the superior Junta, by Caro's advice, had removed to St. Felipe, a city to which it seems strange that its old name of Xativa should not have been at this time restored. There they were to exert themselves for supplying the capital and annoying the invaders, a military Junta being appointed meantime within the city, to dispose of the peasantry who had flocked thither, and to direct the labours of a willing people. A former Junta had been assembled after the dispersion at Alventosa, and in the course of the ensuing night every member had been arrested upon a charge of treason. An edict also was passed, confiscating the property of all who had fled from the city at this time, their absence being interpreted as proof either of cowardice or of treachery. Such severity was not without cause. Relying upon their intelligence in the city, the van of the French army entered the suburb of Murviedro, and occupied the College of Pius V. the Royal Palace, and the Zaidia, all which are without the walls on the farther bank of the Turia. From the palace they fired upon the bridge; and they exasperated, if it were possible to exasperate, the hatred of the Spaniards, by exposing the images which they had taken from the churches on their march and in the suburbs to the fire of the city, having stript some of

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*He retreats
from Va-
lencia.*

CHAP. their taudry attire, and dressed up others in regimentals. But
 XXX. finding their hopes fail, and not being in sufficient force to ven-
 1810. ture upon an attack, they decamped during the night of the 11th,
 March. retreating with such celerity, that they abandoned great part of
 their plunder.

*A conspi-
 racy disco-
 vered in that
 city.*

The Valencians imputed their deliverance on this occasion to their Patroness and Generalissima, the Virgin, under her invocation of Maria Santissima de los Desamparados, and to the Saints who were natives of Valencia. A deliverance it was; for a plan had actually been formed to assassinate the Captain General, and proclamations in favour of King Joseph and his French allies were found upon the chief mover of this treason, Colonel Baron de Pozoblanco. This person, who appears to have been a revolutionary fanatic, suffered under the hangman; his head was exposed upon a stake in the market-place, with an inscription under it, announcing his crime, and charging him also with belonging to the sect of the illuminated Egyptian freemasons, which was said to be extending itself from Madrid into La Mancha, Murcia, and Valencia, and to have converted the different appellations of the Virgin into distinctive names for its own organization.

*The French
 boast of suc-
 cess.*

Suchet's expedition was not made without loss; some of his garrisons and smaller parties were cut off by the Arragonese troops in his rear, under D. Pedro Villacampa. The Castle of Benasque had been taken before he marched against Valencia, and that capture completed his military possession of the north of Arragon; but the people, when deprived of their fortresses, found fastnesses in their mountains, and waged from thence a wearying and wasting war against their oppressors; and Mina's prisoners were escorted from the frontier of Navarre to Lerida, through a country of which the French called and fancied themselves masters. This desultory warfare was carried on in Cata-

lonia also with no less skill than success. Augereau had supposed, that after the reduction of Gerona little more was necessary for the complete subjugation of the province; he boasted of a victory in the plain of Vich, the most glorious, it was said, which the French had yet obtained, wherein O'Donnell had lost 7000 men, with the whole of his baggage, and after which he could find no place of safety till he had taken refuge under the walls of Tarragona. Souham in like manner proclaimed that the famous Rovira had fled before him, notwithstanding his vaunts of the incursions, robberies, and assassinations upon which he prided himself. It was presently seen with what little foundation the invaders boasted of these triumphs.

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O'Donnell's movements were not in consequence of a defeat. Having experienced the superiority which the enemy's discipline gave them in the management of large bodies, he had immediate recourse to that system of warfare, in which enterprise, celerity, and the ardour of the soldiers, are of more avail than tactics. Therefore he retreated rapidly from Moya to Terrasa, leaving Manresa uncovered: the inhabitants of that city forsook it on the approach of the French; and O'Donnell continuing to lead the invaders on, fell back, first to Villa-franca del Panades, then to Torre-dembarra, finally under the walls of Tarragona, executing these movements in good order, and without loss. The enemy, in pursuit, as they believed, of a flying army, occupied Manresa with 1500 men, left 900 in Villa-franca, and proceeded till they also came in sight of Tarragona. One division occupied Vendrell, and extended to Arco de Barra, upon the high road to Barcelona; but in a few days this division joined the main body, which was at Coll de Santa Cristina, and they immediately advanced towards Valls. O'Donnell, profiting by this movement, sent Camp Marshal D. Juan Caro against

*O'Donnell's
successful
operations.*

March 16.

March 28.

CHAP. Villa-franca ; Caro proceeded by forced marches, and surprised
 XXX. the enemy on the following morning ; between 200 and 300 were
 1810. killed, and 640 made prisoners, not a man escaping. Caro him-
 March. self was wounded ; the command of his detachment devolved
 March 30. upon Brigadier D. Gervasio Gasca, and they proceeded toward
 Manresa, to attack the enemy, who occupied that town.

A body of 500 or 600 had already been sent to reinforce the French in Manresa, and had effected their junction, though not without the loss of two carts of ammunition, and forty killed, in an action with a party of somatenes and of expatriates, as those Spaniards were called whose homes were occupied by the enemy. Augereau no sooner heard of the loss in Villa-franca, than, apprehending a similar attack upon Manresa, he ordered a farther reinforcement of 1200 men from Barcelona, to proceed thither with the utmost celerity. Gasca, receiving timely intelligence of their movement, instead of proceeding upon Manresa, marched to intercept this column, and fell in with it between Esparra-
 April 3. guera and Abrera ; 400 were left upon the field, 500 made prisoners, and the remainder fled toward Barcelona, not more than 200 reaching that city. The Spaniards, after this second success, prepared to execute their projected attack upon the enemy in Manresa, and the Marquis de Campoverde took the command for this purpose : but the men had exerted themselves too much in forced marches and in action to perform a third enterprise with the same celerity as the two former ; and on the night before the attack should have been made, Schwartz, who headed the French detachment, evacuated the town, and took the road to Barcelona by Santa Clara, Barata, and Marieta. He began his retreat at eleven on the night of the 4th. Brigadier D. Francisco Milans, who was stationed at San Fructuos, passing the night under arms, to be ready for the attack at seven on the following

morning, was apprised of the enemy's retreat between four and five, and dispatched the corps of expatriates, under Rovira, in pursuit, while the rest of the division followed as fast as possible. Rovira, whom the French had lately reviled as a wretch who was flying before them, passing in two hours over a distance which was the ordinary journey of four, in their pursuit, overtook them at Hostalet, and attacked them with his usual intrepidity. Schwartz, whose force consisted of 1500 men, formed them into a column, and continued to retreat, fighting as he went: Rovira, however, so impeded his movements, that he gave time for Milans to come up with them near Sabadell; the Spaniards then charged with the bayonet; 500 of the French fell, 300 were made prisoners; Schwartz himself was wounded, and owed his life to the swiftness of his horse. Some of the French, after having surrendered, were said to have fired upon the Spaniards, and this was assigned as the cause why the number of the slain exceeded that of the prisoners.

The amount of the killed and taken in these actions falls far short of the sum of the French loss; for the desertion was very great, every defeat giving the Germans, who were forced into their wicked service, an opportunity of escaping from it. The whole loss which they sustained from these well-planned enterprises was not less than 5000. O'Donnell hoped that he should now be enabled to relieve Hostalrich; but the main body of the French returning toward Barcelona from Reus, which they had taken possession of a few days before, compelled Campoverde's division to fall back, and thus prevented the attempt. In Catalonia, indeed, though more military talent and far more energy were displayed than in the other provinces, it was less a war of armies than of the people against a great military force. Wherever the French moved in large bodies, the Catalans could not resist them, or resisted in vain; in general actions and in sieges,

CHAP.
XXX.
1810.

CHAP. the enemy were sure to be successful ; the French, therefore, and
 XXX. they in this country who would have had us abandon the Pen-
 1810. insula to their mercy, concluded that the party which won battles,
 February. and captured fortresses, must necessarily soon become masters
 of the country ; and they reasoned thus, because they never took
 into their calculation the national character, the natural strength
 of Spain, and the moral strength of man.

*Siege of
 Hostalrich.*

The effect of that moral power was shown not less admirably at Hostalrich than it had been at Zaragoza and Gerona, though the three sieges differed from each other in all their circumstances. The little town of Hostalrich was not included within the works, and the fortress contained no other inhabitants than its garrison. The bombardment began on the 20th of February. The adjutant, D. Jose Antonio Roca, was writing a dispatch for the governor to the commander-in-chief, when a shell burst so near them, that one of the fragments entered the room and swept away every thing from off the table : Roca picked up his paper, and, remarking that the sand which it carried with it might save him the trouble of telling the general they were bombarded, continued his dispatch. A private soldier, who went out of the works for water, received a musket-ball in his groin as he was returning ; he laid one hand upon the wound, and carrying in the pitcher steadily with the other, met his serjeant, to whom he delivered it ; then groping in the wound for the ball, which probably had not gone deep, he pulled it out with his fingers, and gave it to the serjeant, saying, “ I deposit this ball in your hands ; keep it for me, and as soon as I am cured, this very bullet shall revenge me upon the first Frenchman at whom I can get a shot.” And as he went to the hospital he charged his comrades, in case he should not live to take vengeance for himself, that they would take it for him. Such was the spirit with which Hostalrich was defended. “ Let every circumstance of the siege

be made known!" said this brave garrison; "if we are successful, the detail will give hope, and confidence, and joy to every true patriot; if we are unfortunate, it will excite a different feeling, but it will never produce shame or dismay."

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1810.
March.

Verdier, who now commanded the besieging force, addressed a new summons to the governor at the time of O'Donnell's retreat to Tarragona, representing that movement as the consequence of a total defeat. "The wreck of the Spanish army," he said, "was seeking a moment's shelter in Tarragona and Tortosa, vigorously pursued by Augereau in person, who would immediately commence the siege of both places. The siege of Lerida was already far advanced, and its fall inevitable. Hostalrich was a fort of no other use than as it interrupted the communication between Gerona and Barcelona; and this purpose it no longer effected, the French having made a new road, and communicating freely between those cities. The object, therefore, for defending it, no longer existed; and longer resistance, instead of adding to the governor's glory, would be called a vain obstinacy, draw upon him the reproaches of posterity, and make him responsible for the blood which should be shed." Considering these circumstances, the French general summoned him to surrender, and offered him the honours of war. The Marshal Duke of Castiglione, Augereau, he added, revoking his former declaration, had authorized him to propose these terms. "You will do well, sir," he continued, "to accept them with glory; if you delay, they will without doubt be refused to you; and you will then be obliged to suffer conditions, which, however rigorous they may appear, are dictated by justice, seeing that a protracted resistance is neither justified by honour nor by reason." Estrada replied, by simply referring him to his former determination, and to the conduct of the garrison.

The situation of the fortress, upon a craggy height, secured

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1810.

May.

it against an assault, while there were any resolute men to defend it. The bombardment continued till every building within the walls had been destroyed, except a casemate, which served as an hospital, and was only large enough to hold one-and-twenty beds; the remainder of the sick and wounded were secured in a mine, and the garrison also had their quarters underground. Supplies had been introduced about the middle of the siege; all other attempts had been defeated, and would have been of no avail at length had they succeeded, because the cisterns were destroyed. Estrada had the example of O'Donnell's retreat from Gerona before him, and determined to make his way through the enemy's lines, rather than capitulate. This he concerted with O'Donnell, who, for the purpose of deceiving the besiegers, ordered some vessels to approach Arenys de Mar, the nearest part of the coast, sent one detachment to call off their attention on the side of Orsaviña and Monnegre, and another on the southern skirts of Monseny toward Breda. Augereau, who had come to witness the capture of a fortress which had resisted him for four months, sent in a last summons on the evening of the 11th of May, offering the same terms which had been granted to Gerona; he allowed the governor two hours for consideration, and declared, that if the fort was not then delivered up, the whole of the garrison should be put to the sword. Estrada laid this before his officers, and with one consent they returned for answer, that they thanked the Marshal for thinking them worthy of being thus named with Gerona, but that they were not yet in a condition which should make them yield. On the following morning, the men, to their great joy, were informed of the resolution which had been taken.

*Retreat of
the garrison.*

The French expected such an attempt, and judged, from the stir which they beheld in the fort, that it would be made in the ensuing night. That evening, therefore, they strengthened

their post at Tordera on the right, thinking, as the men themselves did, that the governor would make for Arenys de Mar, where the ships were awaiting him. At ten, the garrison descended the glacis on the side of the high road of St. Celoni, and crossed the road and the space between the fort and the heights of Masanas. It was broad moonlight. Two advanced parties, to the right and left, fell upon the enemy's picquets with the bayonet; those, however, who escaped gave the alarm; but the garrison had gained the start, ascended to St. Jacinto, and hastened toward St. Feliu de Buxaleu. A league from Hostalrich they fell in with an enemy's encampment, and routed them; this gave the alarm to another body of 2000 French, whose station was near, on the road to Arbucias; but they were received so resolutely, that they soon gave over the pursuit. Thus all was effected which could be done by skill and courage; one division lost its way, and many of the men dropt on the road, their strength failing them on this great exertion, from the want of rest and food, which they had long endured. Among them was the noble Julian de Estrada, who thus fell into the hands of the enemy: this was a heavier loss to his country than that of the fortress which he had defended so well; for in the course of the war, Catalonia had but too much cause bitterly to regret the loss of such men as Estrada and Alvarez. Five hundred men reached Vich in safety on the following day, 132 joined them on the next, being part of the battalion of Gerona, who had lost their way and fallen in with the enemy; stragglers continually came in, and on the evening of that day, the number who had accomplished their retreat amounted to 800, though the French asserted, that every man was either killed or taken.

In such an enterprise, it was impossible to bring off the sick and wounded; the comptroller of the hospital, D. Manuel Miguel Mellado, remained with them to go through the form of

CHAP.
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1810.
May.

CHAP. delivering up the ruins, and provide for their safety. Such of the
XXX. invalids as were best able mounted guard, the gates were closed,
1810. and the drawbridges raised; and in this state Mellado anxiously
May. waited for what might happen. Half an hour before midnight,
a brisk fire of musketry was poured in upon the flanks of the
ravelin, and of St. Francisco. Mellado called out to the enemy
to cease firing, for the fort was theirs; and he requested them to
wait till the morning, that he might deliver a letter from the go-
vernor to the French general. They replied, they would suffer
no delay, the gates must instantly be opened; otherwise, they
had ladders, and would enter and put every man to the sword.
He, however, told them he would not open the gates till he had
seen their general; upon this they renewed their fire, setting up
a loud shout, like men who were about to obtain possession of
their prey. Mellado hastened to the bulwark of St. Barbara,
where he apprehended the escalade would be made, and there
he perceived that the enemy, who had found a rope-ladder in
the covered way, were endeavouring to grapple the drawbridge
with it; but, either from the weight of the rope, which rendered
it difficult to be thrown, or because the irons were not sufficiently
sharp to lay hold, their attempts were frustrated. This Mellado
could not foresee; and knowing that no time was to be lost, he
hastened out through a covered way to the nearest work of the
enemy, and called out to the commandant, requesting him to
stop the assault, and send him to the general, that he might
deliver the governor's letter; the party who were flanking the
ravelin no sooner heard his voice, than they fired a volley to-
wards it; upon which, without waiting for an answer, he has-
tened to the nearest sentinel of the French, and the captain of
the guard conducted him to the French commandant in the
town; whom he entreated to have compassion upon the wounded
in the fort, and call off the assailants. This officer was a man

of humanity, and instantly sent off to suspend the assault, while Mellado, who was now delivered from his fears for his poor defenceless countrymen, was escorted to the general. In the morning the gates were opened to the enemy. The French soldiers gave sufficient proof how little mercy the wounded would have found at their hands, had they been under no controul, for they stript the clothes and blankets from the beds of these helpless men. Mazzachelli gave orders that they should be conveyed to Gerona; and Mellado, having seen this performed, and perceiving that it was intended to detain him and his assistants as prisoners, took the first opportunity of making his escape.

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XXX.
1810.

At the very time when the garrison of Hostalrich, after a four months' defence, and a bombardment, during which between three and four thousand shells were thrown into the place, thus gallantly effected their retreat, the Catalans suffered another loss. The islands and fortress of Las Medas, which were of material importance from their position on the coast, were surprised by a party of Neapolitan infantry, and given up in a manner which the French imputed to cowardice, though, by their own account, treason, on the part of the commander, was the only intelligible cause of the surrender. Lerida also was rather betrayed than yielded by Garcia Conde. The town was entered by assault; and the castle, where the works were uninjured, and which, under Alvarez or Estrada, might have rivalled Gerona, was surrendered the next day. For this there was no excuse; O'Donnell's last orders to the governor had been, that if the city should be taken, he was to defend the fortresses; and if no such orders had been given, his duty required him to hold out to the last extremity. The commander-in-chief, who rewarded the defenders of Hostalrich with a medal, stigmatized this conduct as it deserved; but he reminded the Catalans, that Tarragona, Tortosa, Cardona, Berga, Seu de Urgel, Coll de

*Las Medas
and Lerida
surrendered*

May 13.

CHAP. Ballaguer, and Mequinenza, still remained as bulwarks of the
 XXX. principality ; that if all these were lost, there would be their in-
 1810. accessible mountains ; and that when they began the war, they
 had neither army nor fortresses, for all their fortified places had
 been dismantled. A wound which he had received during the
 siege of Gerona, and which had never been healed, because he
 never allowed himself rest enough from the incessant and anxious
 activity of his situation, became now so threatening, that he was
 constrained for a while to withdraw from the command. Augereau
 also, about the same time, was recalled. His success in
 sieges did not expiate, in Buonaparte's eyes, for the loss in men
 and reputation which he had sustained from an enemy who were
 now become as wary as they were active and enterprising. Mar-
 shal Macdonald, Duke of Tarento, succeeded him. The plunder
 of Barcelona was sent into France under Augereau's escort ; and
 a number of commercial adventurers from that country, who
 being deceived by the French official accounts, had supposed
 that Spain was actually subdued, and gone thither with the intent
 of forming establishments, gladly seized the first opportunity of
 returning in safety.

*Augereau
 superseded
 by Marshal
 Macdonald.*

If the war was carried on by the Catalans with an unwearied and unremitting energy which was not displayed in other parts of Spain, it was not wholly owing to that enterprising and unconquerable spirit by which they have always been characterized, but in some degree to the natural strength of the province, and still more to the advantage which they derived from having many places in their possession which could not be reduced without a regular siege. Throughout Spain there existed the same feeling of indignation against the invaders, . . . but where the country, the villages, and the towns were alike open, there was not the same possibility of resistance ; plains could not be defended by peasantry ; nor could the contest be maintained by large bodies

against a superior enemy, when there were neither fortified towns nor natural fastnesses on which they could retire. In such parts the war was carried on by guerrilla parties, who made incursions from the mountainous districts into the plains, and whenever it was necessary to disperse, found friends every where. Wherever the French were nominally masters of the country, the guerrillas harassed their communication, cut off their small parties, and diminished their numbers by a mode of warfare as disheartening to the enemy as it was consuming and inglorious; while in the stronger parts of the kingdom, such as Asturias, and the province of Cuenca, and the mountains of Ronda, the inhabitants perseveringly defended their native soil.

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1810.

Cadiz, however, was the point whereon all eyes were at this time turned, in expectation of great events. Victor had been left to command the siege, if siege it may be called. The French occupied the shore of the bay, fortified their own position, and endeavoured to annoy the shipping and the town; a regular attack upon the isle was too perilous for them to attempt. Fort Matagorda was the only point from which it was thought possible that they could injure the town: it had been built for the defence of the arsenal, opposite to the broadest part of that tongue of land which connects Cadiz with the Isle of Leon. From thence it was apprehended they might with the largest land mortars throw shells to the gates of the city; Ormond indeed had planted his cannon there, in the fruitless attempt upon Cadiz in Queen Anne's reign. The fort, like the other land-works, had been dismantled upon their approach; but when it was seen that they were beginning to reconstruct it, it was deemed advisable that they should be dispossessed, and that the post should be maintained as long as possible against them. Accordingly they were compelled to abandon it, and the hasty works which could be re-erected were garrisoned by a party of

Fort Matagorda taken by the French.

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British soldiers and seamen under Captain Maclean. They defended it for nearly two months, till it was reduced to a heap of ruins; and having lost in the last two days sixteen killed and fifty-seven wounded, were brought off by the boats of the British squadron, under the fire of the enemy's batteries, with little loss. The manner in which this weak fort was defended taught the French what they might expect if they should attempt the Isle of Leon, for the defence of which a formidable line of works behind the Santi Pietri had now been executed under the direction of General Sir Thomas Graham, who had arrived from England to command the auxiliary forces there. These works extended to the ocean on the right, and on the left occupied the Caraccas as an advanced post. The French also were more intent upon securing themselves in their cantonments than upon annoying the Spaniards. They fortified Puerto Real, Puerto Santa Maria, and Chiclana, formed entrenched camps between these places, and strengthened the Trocadero, where they established batteries from whence to bombard the town. Having presently found the inefficiency of the field artillery, which was all that they had brought with them, they fished up the guns from the French and Spanish ships which had been wrecked upon that coast after the battle of Trafalgar. Most of the heavy pieces with which two-and-twenty batteries were now mounted were recovered in this manner from the sea.

*Storm at
Cadiz.*

The French, though disappointed in their main object here by Alburquerque's sagacity, and the prompt assistance of the British forces, were in high spirits. They were in a fine country; their quarters were at once commodious and secure; and a few weeks after their arrival the winds and waves threw into their possession no inconsiderable booty. For during a tremendous gale, which continued four days with unabated violence, three line of battle ships, one frigate, and about forty merchantmen

were * driven to the side of the bay which they occupied, and went on shore at the height of the spring tide. The men were taken out by the boats of the British squadron, and the ships were set on fire by the enemy's red-hot shot; but no small part of the lading fell into their hands. During the tempest the French on board the prison ships could not receive their supplies of provisions and water from the shore; their signals of distress were disregarded by the Spaniards; and if the British Admiral had not sent his boats to their relief as soon as the gale abated, very many more of these miserable men than actually perished must have fallen victims, the Spaniards being in no haste to encounter the swell for the sake of enemies whom they seem to have considered as out of the pale of humanity. In the case of these prisoners, indeed, they had cast off all compassion, and the obduracy of the national character was fully manifested towards them, the negligence of the government being in this instance hardly less criminal than the avarice and brutality of those whom it employed. Admiral Pickmore perceiving with how little care the pontoons were secured, proposed to the Spanish Admiral that chains should be used as bridles to their

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1810.

March.

*Cruel usage
of the
French pri-
soners in the
bay.*

* Some days after the storm the boats of the *Triumph* picked up about thirty tons of quicksilver, in leathern bags of fifty pounds each, which were cast on shore from the wreck. They were stowed below in the store-rooms and after-hold, and the bags having been thoroughly soaked in the sea, decayed and burst before the danger was perceived. As much of the quicksilver as possible was collected, but it insinuated itself every where, and not less than ten tons weight was supposed to have got between the timbers, which could only be cleared by docking the ship and removing a plank at the lowest part near the keel. The provisions were spoilt; two or three hundred of the crew were so severely affected, that it was necessary to remove them immediately, many of them being in a state which left little chance of recovery; and the ship was sent to Gibraltar to have all her stores taken out, and undergo a thorough clearance.

CHAP. cables ; application was made to the Admiral in command at
 XXX. the Caraccas ; they were promised from time to time, but never
 1810. sent ; and, as the British Commander had foreseen, the pri-
 May. soners in the Castilla, nearly 700 in number, and mostly officers,
 May 15. cut the cable one night, when wind and tide were in their fa-
 vour, and hoisting a sail which they had made from their ham-
 mocks, ran for the opposite coast. English boats were presently
 sent after them, while it was doubted whether the vessel had
 not by accident parted from her anchor ; but when they reached
 her it was impossible to board, the pontoon being light, her ports
 all down, no steps on the side, nor ropes over it, and the French
 prepared, not only with musketry, but with cannon-ball of
 twenty-four and thirty-six pounders, which had been used for
 ballast in the vessel : two hundred men were stationed to throw
 these by hand, and the boats were presently disabled when such
 missiles were showered upon them. Fort Puntales and the gun
 and mortar boats opened their fire upon the pontoon, the vessel
 was burnt, but the fugitives, with little loss, effected their escape*.

Escape of
two prison
ships.

A week later the French had nearly obtained possession of
 a rich prize. The S. Elmo, line of battle ship, with 250,000*l.*
 on board, in attempting to work out of the bay, got under their
 battery of S. Catalina. She was saved by the exertions of the
 officers and men in all the boats of the British squadron.
 Having turned her head round, the greater part of them went
 on board, and fought her guns with good effect till out of the
 enemy's reach. The French had better fortune with the Argo-
 nauta pontoon ; the prisoners on board that vessel, about six

* A minute and interesting account of this escape was published at Lausanne, 1817, with this title, *Relation du Séjour des Prisonniers de Guerre Français et Suisses sur le Ponton la Castille, dans la Baie de Cadix, et de leur Evasion le 15 May, 1810. Par L. Chapuis, de Lausanne, Chirurgien major.*

hundred in number, followed the example of their comrades in the Castilla; a third of these were killed by the fire which was kept up upon them; the remainder escaped from the burning hulk. But though the Spaniards had taken no precautions for rendering such attempts impracticable, they felt how dangerous it was to keep so large a body of prisoners in the bay while a French army was in possession of the shores. Two ships of the line were at this time under orders to carry part of them to the Canaries; and more would have been sent to Majorca and Minorca, whither 5000 had been transported in the preceding year, if the inhabitants had not at this crisis been in a state of excitement, which would have rendered a farther importation dangerous both to the prisoners themselves and to the government. Serious disturbances had broken out in both islands, not from any spirit of disaffection, but from distress, and indignation that so many of these unhappy persons should be cast among them, and no adequate means provided for their subsistence. The Minorcans were less likely to be patient under such misgovernment than any other Spaniards, remembering the prosperity and good order which they had enjoyed while their island was in possession of the English: with them, however, the ebullition of popular feeling past harmlessly off, while Majorca became the scene of a disgraceful and dreadful tragedy. Some fugitives landed at Palma from those parts of the south which had lately fallen under the French yoke; they brought horrible tales concerning the invasion of Andalusia and the conduct of the invaders; and the people, excited by these horrors, cried out for vengeance upon the prisoners. Troops were called out to protect these unfortunate men, but the soldiers would not act against their countrymen; and when the commander, General Reding, as the only means of saving the prisoners, consented that they should be sent to the desert island of Cabrera,

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1810.

May.*Insurrection
against the
prisoners at
Majorca.*

CHAP. many were butchered in his presence, in spite of his entreaties
 XXX. and exertions, and many thrown into the sea, before the embarka-
 1810. tion could be effected; nor could it have been effected, if the
 May. soldiers had not at length been provoked to fire upon the mob.

*Prisoners
 sent to Ca-
 brera.*

*Their inhu-
 man treat-
 ment there.*

*Mémoires
 d'un Officier
 Français,
 Prisonnier
 en Espagne,
 255, 287.*

Five thousand at first, and afterwards half as many more, were landed upon Cabrera, a rocky island about fifteen miles in circumference, with no other inhabitants than a handful of soldiers, who were stationed there to prevent the Barbary corsairs from making it a place of rendezvous. A few tents were provided for the superior officers, the remainder were left to shelter themselves as they could. There was but one spring on the island, and in summer this was dry: they discovered some old wells, which had been filled up, and which, when cleared, yielded bad water, and very little of it. The supplies from Palma were sent so irregularly, sometimes owing to the weather, but far more frequently to inhuman negligence, that scores and hundreds of these miserable creatures died of hunger and thirst; many were in a state of complete nakedness, when in mere humanity clothing was sent them by the British commander in the Mediterranean: and at other times they were kept alive by barrels of biscuit and of meat which the English ships threw overboard for them, to be cast on shore. But in the third year of their abode, the captain of a Spanish frigate, whose name ought to have been recorded, remonstrated so effectually upon the manner of their treatment, that from that time they were regularly supplied with food. He gave them potatoes and cabbage and tobacco seed, from which they raised sufficient for their consumption; and having by persevering labour, without any other tools than a single knife, broken six feet into a rock, on the surface of which there was appearance enough of moisture to excite their hopes, they obtained a supply of water. Some of them used the skulls of their own dead, for want of other vessels, to contain it; . . and others,

with no such excuse of necessity, manufactured buttons from their bones! About 1500 entered the Spanish service rather than endure a banishment to which no end could be foreseen; and some 500, chiefly officers, were in compassion removed to England. At the end of the war not more than 2000 remained in Cabrera, nearly half of those who had been landed there having sunk under their sufferings. The Spaniards departed from the straight path of probity when they broke the terms of capitulation which had been granted at Baylen. They committed that breach of faith in deference to popular outcry, and to the sophistry of one who soon proved himself a traitor, . . . the most odious of all those men whom the Revolution either found wicked or made so: and in the subsequent treatment of the prisoners humanity was as little regarded, as honour had been in detaining them. Many and grievous were the errors which the Spaniards committed in the course of the war; but this is the only part of its history which will be remembered for them as a national reproach.

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1810.

See vol. i.
p. 389.

On the other hand, the French had as yet abated nothing of that insolent cruelty with which they began the contest, supposing that they could intimidate the Spanish nation. Soult, who had recommended that all the commanding officers employed in Spain should be *impassible*, . . . incapable of any feeling by which they might even possibly be moved to compunction, . . . issued at this time an edict not less extraordinary than Kellermann's. After various enactments, some of which were as impracticable as they were rigorous, imposing penalties upon the inhabitants of those districts in which the patriotic parties should commit any crimes, as this Frenchman was pleased to denominate their hostilities against the invaders of their country; he pronounced, "that there was no Spanish army, except that of his catholic majesty, King Joseph Napoleon; all parties, therefore, which existed in

M. Soult's
edict.

May 9.

See p. 334.

CHAP. the provinces, whatever might be their number, and whoever
XXX. might be their commander, should be treated as banditti, who
1810. had no other object than robbery and murder; and all the in-
dividuals of such parties who might be taken in arms should
be immediately condemned and shot, and their bodies exposed
along the highways." When the Regency found that this decree
was actually carried into effect, they reprinted it, with a counter
decree by its side, in French and Spanish, declaring anew,
"that every Spaniard capable of bearing arms was in these
times a soldier; that for every one who should be murdered by
the French, in consequence of the edict of the ferocious Soult,
who called himself Duke of Dalmatia, the three first Frenchmen
taken in arms should infallibly be hanged; three for every house
which the enemy burnt in their devastating system, and three
for every person who should perish in the fire." Soult himself
they declared unworthy of the protection of the law of nations,
while his decree remained unrepealed. They gave orders, that
if he were taken, he should be punished as a robber; and they
took measures for circulating both decrees throughout Europe,
to the end that all persons might be informed of the atrocious
conduct of these enemies of the human race; and that those in-
habitants of the countries which were in alliance with France,
or, more truly, which were enslaved by her, who were unhappy
enough to have children, or kinsmen, or friends serving in the
French armies in Spain, might see the fate prepared for them
by the barbarity of a monster, who thought by such means to
subdue a free and noble nation.

*Counter
edict of the
Regency.
Aug. 15.*

CHAPTER XXXI.

ASTORGA TAKEN BY THE FRENCH. SIEGE AND FALL OF
CIUDAD RODRIGO.

HOSTILITIES were carried on before Cadiz with equal languor on both sides, the French making no attempt on the Isle of Leon, and the Spaniards none for breaking up the land-blockade. On the enemy's part this inaction was occasioned by their knowledge of the strength of the works; on that of the Spaniards by want of energy in the government, and want of spirit in the people of Cadiz. The Regency, immediately upon their appointment, had sent for Cuesta to reside either in the city or the isle, that they might profit by his advice, regarding him, they said, as the main pillar of the country: they expressed their deep sorrow for some outrages which had been committed against his venerable age, and their determination to inflict exemplary punishment upon the offenders: they ordered that part of his appointments should forthwith be paid, and promised the whole arrears as soon as it should be possible to discharge them. The time, however, for Cuesta's services, either in the field or the council, was past; and the old General employed his latter days in composing a vindictive attack upon the fallen Junta, which called forth on their part a complete justification of their conduct towards him. On that score they had nothing wherewith to reproach themselves; but they must have felt some self-condemnation in reflecting that the two generals, who in the hour of

1810.

*Inactivity
before Ca-
diz.**The Re-
gency send
for Cuesta.*

CHAP. extreme danger had acted with promptitude and success, were
 XXXI. the men in whom they had least confided. Alburquerque they
 1810. had regarded with jealousy, and Romana they had deprived of
 his command in deference to the deputies of Asturias.

*Badajoz se-
 cured by
 Romana.*

The service which Romana had rendered at that crisis was only of less importance than the preservation of the Isle of Leon. He had secured Badajoz when a corps of 12,000 men from Seville thought to have obtained possession of it by a coup-de-main: some Portugeze had come to his assistance, and their artillery-men distinguished themselves when the enemy ventured to approach the walls. Baffled in this attempt, the French retired to Merida, Zafra, and S. Marta, where they were annoyed by the division of his army under D. Carlos O'Donnell, brother to the commander in Catalonia.

*The British
 take a posi-
 tion on the
 frontiers of
 Beira.*

Lord Wellington had nearly 9000 sick when his head-quarters were removed from Badajoz; but when, in clear anticipation of the enemy's intentions, he took a position on the frontiers of Beira, they rapidly recovered strength in that salubrious country. On the side of Alentejo he knew that the invasion would not be attempted; attempts in that quarter had always proved unsuccessful: if Badajoz and Elvas had been reduced, Lisbon was secured by the Tagus, and there is no other part of Portugal in which an army would suffer so much from disease, and from want of water; this indeed Loison had experienced. On the side of Gallicia the French had so lately felt how difficult it was to retreat, that it was altogether unlikely they would risk the same danger again, even if it had not been necessary again to obtain possession of that province as a preliminary measure. It appeared certain, therefore, that the attempt would be made by way of Beira, the only remaining and most practicable route for an invading army. Their first step must be to besiege Ciudad Rodrigo. This, he knew, had been recommended by a council

*See vol. i.
 p. 537.*

of war held in September at Salamanca ; and its success, he then observed, would do more evil than the French could effect in any other way ; for it would cut off the only communication of the Spanish government with the northern provinces, give the enemy the command of Castille, and probably draw after it the loss of Almeida. Looking, therefore, to Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida as the points of which the enemy must obtain possession before they could march either upon Lisbon or Porto, he chose a position in the segment of a circle, of which the convex part was opposed to the quarter from whence the invasion was expected. Guarda, Celorico, Pinhel, and the west bank of the Coa, were its four main points ; the Coa, with its tributary streams, flowing in front of his line along the greater part of its extent. That river rises in the Sierra de Xalma, which is a part of the Serra da Gata, and enters Portugal by Folgoso ; another stream, which is also regarded as its source, rises near Sabugal ; it receives many smaller rivers, and falls into the Douro near Villa Nova de Foscoa. Its waters are supposed to be excellent for dying wool and tempering steel, but unwholesome.

Before the French entered upon their operations in this quarter, they thought it necessary to obtain complete possession of Leon, that their communication might be open with Valladolid. They had been repulsed in an attempt upon Astorga, in the preceding September, by Santocildes, who remained as governor there. That city was surrounded with walls, which gave it an appearance of antiquity, not of strength. They had been erected many centuries ago, and were so massive, and at the same time considered as of so little consequence for purposes of defence, that the poor were permitted to dig holes in them which served for habitations. The garrison consisted of about 3000 men, of whom from 500 to 600 were on the hospital list. Some attempts had been made to render the city defensible, according

CHAP.
XXXI.
1810.

*Astorga
summoned
by the
French.*

CHAP. to the system of modern warfare, by the enemy, after Buonaparte
 XXXI. entered it in pursuit of Sir J. Moore ; and when the Spaniards
 1810. recovered it, they added to these works. Still the fortifications
 were such, that though the French might deem them sufficient
 against an armed peasantry, or a guerrilla party, it was never expected that any resistance would be made there against a regular force. After the French had overrun Andalusia, and when they were proclaiming, that the brigands had been put to the sword, and the Napoleonic throne established in Cadiz, . . for this falsehood was in such phrase asserted in their Spanish gazettes, . . Loison, whose head-quarters were at Bañeza, the nearest town, wrote to the governor, telling him, that King Joseph had entered Seville amid the acclamations of the inhabitants ; that Andalusia had submitted ; the Junta was dissolved ; and almost all the people of Spain, awakened now to a sense of their true interest, had had recourse to the clemency of their sovereign, who received them like a father. He urged Santocildes to imitate so good an example, and appoint a place where they might meet and confer upon such terms as must needs persuade him to this wise and honourable course. Santocildes replied to this overture, that he knew his duty, and would do it.

Feb. 16.

*Siege of
Astorga.*

On the 21st of March, Junot invested Astorga with 12,000 men, of whom about a tenth part were cavalry, by means of which he became master of the open country. The vigorous measures of Santocildes obstructed his operations so much, that a month elapsed before he opened his batteries. They began on three sides at once, at daybreak on the 20th of April, and soon effected a breach on the north, by the Puerta de Hierro ; but immediately behind the breach the Spaniards pulled down a house, the foundations of which served as a formidable trench ; they kept up their fire during the night, and at eleven the following morning Junot once more summoned the governor to

surrender, declaring that, if he held out two hours longer, the city should be stormed, and the garrison put to the sword. The governor having returned a becoming answer, the batteries renewed their fire; the bombardment was recommenced; the cathedral was set on fire, with many other houses, and a whole street in the suburbs; and the French, thinking to profit by the confusion, assaulted the breach: 2000 men were appointed for this service: great part perished before they could reach the wall; the remainder mounted the breach; the works within impeded them, a destructive fire was poured upon them, and after an hour and a half they were repulsed. At the same time the suburb was assaulted, and with the same success; the enemy being three times baffled in their attempts. Their loss this day amounted to 1500 men.

CHAP.
XXXI.
1810.
March.

Had the city been well stored, it would have cost the besiegers still dearer; but after this signal success, Santocildes found himself with only thirty round of cartridges remaining for the men, and eight only for the artillery. Junot passed the night in making a covered way from the trenches to the foot of the breach, where he lodged a large body of picked men. Meantime a council of war was held; the impossibility of resisting with advantage for want of ammunition was admitted; some officers proposed that they should cut their way through the besiegers; . . . the strength of the enemy's cavalry was one impediment to this, but it was rejected on account of the inhabitants; for Astorga was not like Hostalrich, where the garrison had only themselves to provide for; and unless terms were made for the town's-people, what they might expect from such conquerors as Junot and Loison was but too well known. Fresh works of defence were thrown up within the breach while this deliberation was going on, that nothing might be omitted, and at daybreak a capitulation was proposed. They demanded and obtained the honours

*Its sur-
render.*

CHAP. of war for themselves ; security for the inhabitants, both in per-
 XXXI. son and property ; that the men should keep their knapsacks,
 1810. and the officers their horses, swords, and baggage. This part
March. of the capitulation was broken, and the officers were plundered
 as they left the town. Even Junot, however, returned Santocildes his sword, saying, that so brave a man ought not to be without one. In the course of the siege the enemy lost 2500 in killed alone ; so dearly was Astorga purchased. But the more gallant its resistance, the more was that misconduct to be regretted which had infected the provincial Juntas as strongly as the Central Government. Since July last Galicia had been entirely delivered from the enemy ; the population of that province, when the census of 1797 was taken, amounted to nearly a million and a half ; the people had shown their spirit, and if due exertions had been made on the part of the civil and military authorities, an army might have been formed there, capable not only of preserving Astorga, but of essentially co-operating with the British and Portuguese in the subsequent operations.

*Affair at
 Barba del
 Puerco.*

After this conquest, Junot, leaving a small garrison in Astorga, marched into Old Castille, where Ney had previously been joined by the corps of Loison, Regnier, and Kellermann. The campaign had already begun here. In the beginning of March the French army were upon the Tormes, with their advanced posts upon the Agueda. Lord Wellington was at Viseu, and his advanced posts, under General Craufurd, were upon the Agueda also, and between that river and the Coa. The first time that the British and French troops met after the battle of Talavera was in an affair of outposts, at Barba del Puerco : four companies of the 85th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Beckwith, were posted at that place ; the French had a strong party immediately opposite, on the other side the Agueda, in the village of St. Felices. The only bridge below Ciudad Rodrigo is between these villages,

March 19.

and as the river at this season was swollen with rain, this was the only passage. The country is rocky and mountainous, and though the advanced sentries of both parties were within a few yards of the bridge, it was not expected that either would attempt to annoy the other; so great were the obstacles which the nature of the ground presented. The French, however, collected a brigade in St. Felices, and after night had closed marched 600 men toward the bridge. About midnight they were all assembled there, and made the advanced sentries prisoners; a picquet of eighty men, posted behind the rocks, immediately fired upon them and retreated in excellent order; they pushed on up the mountain, hoping to surprise the remainder of the men, but were presently repulsed. The loss was trifling on either side. Marshal Ney, however, ventured to assert, that the English had been routed at the point of the bayonet, and that their transports were ready at Porto and Lisbon.

The French had learnt at Vimeiro, and Coruña, and Talavera, to respect British valour, but they had not yet been taught to respect English policy; and they fully expected that if they brought a superior force against him, Lord Wellington would fly through Portugal, and seek shelter in his ships. Preparations, therefore, were made for this third invasion, with an army far exceeding in number those which Junot and Soult had commanded, even if they had been united, and under Massena, a general of higher rank than either. No general in the French service had enjoyed so high a reputation since Hoche, and Pichegru, and Moreau had disappeared. Buonaparte, in his first campaigns, called him, in his own inflated style, the favourite Child of Victory; and after the late Austrian war, created him Prince of Essling, because his skill and exertions had contributed mainly to the escape of the French from utter destruction at the battle of Aspern. He was appointed commander-in-

CHAP.
XXXI.
1810.
March.

*Massena
appointed
to the army
of Portugal.*

CHAP. chief of the provinces of the north of Spain, including the king-
 XXXI. doms of Old Castille, Leon, and Asturias; the provinces of St.
 1810. Andero, Soria, Valladolid and Palencia, Toro, Zamora, Sala-
April. manca and Avila; the army under him was named the army of
 Portugal; and, as Soult had done before him, it is believed
 that he went to make the conquest of Portugal, expecting to be
 rewarded with its crown for his success.

*Ciudad
 Rodrigo.*

In the later wars between Spain and Portugal, the three cities
 where the Spaniards used to collect their armies before they
 invaded the enemy's country were Tuy, Ciudad Rodrigo, and
 Badajoz. Of these fortresses, Tuy, like Valença on the opposite
 frontier, is now of little strength or importance, Badajoz a strong
 place, Ciudad Rodrigo hardly to be ranked in the third order of
 fortresses. It was built some centuries ago, when the site was
 sufficiently convenient for a fortified town; but the situation is
 bad; the works were old and imperfect, and it had other local
 disadvantages. It is commanded from many points; and one
 height, within 500 toises of the city, exceeds by about fifty yards
 the highest of its buildings. There were no bomb-proofs; and
 the suburbs, in which there were four convents, and the number
 of gardens without the walls, materially assisted the operations of
 a besieging army. The population of the city had been estimated
 at about 10,000; but it appears not much to have exceeded half
 that number. The garrison amounted to 4950, including 600
 townsmen; the greater part of the others being volunteers, or
 men newly raised. Camp Marshal D. Andres Perez de Herrasti
 was governor, an old man, who had been the friend and comrade
 of Mariano Alvarez.

*The French
 besiege it.*

On the 25th of April 6000 French appeared before the
 place, and encamped in the *Termino* of Pedro Toro, a league to
 the eastward. On the 30th, the second division, consisting of
 from 4000 to 5000, arrived and encamped in the *Termino* of

Valde Carros, a league to the north. Five days afterwards, another encampment was formed between the two. On May 15th, another division, of about 7000 men, encamped to the westward, upon Monte de Ibanrey. So large a force was necessary, because the English were near at hand. By the 4th of June the city was completely invested. This was not effected without repeated skirmishes, in which the enemy suffered considerable loss. In these affairs, D. Antonio Camargo, commandant of the volunteers of Avila, greatly distinguished himself; but the individual who, above all others, annoyed the enemy by his incessant enterprise, was D. Julian Sanchez, the son of a farmer, near the banks of the Guebra. Till the invasion of his country, he had cultivated his father's lands; but when his father, mother, and sister, had been murdered by the French, he made a vow of vengeance, and, at the head of one of those bands which the Spaniards call *guerrillas*, well performed it. On one occasion he surprised, in his father's house, a French colonel, infamous for his atrocities, and put him to death, first telling him who it was that inflicted his merited punishment in this world, and sent him to render account for his crimes in the next.

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XXXI.
1810.
May.

*D. Julian
Sanchez.*

This enterprising leader made repeated assaults upon the enemy, not hesitating, at the head of sixty, eighty, or an hundred of his lancers, to attack three or four times his own number. Camargo, and D. Jose Puente, commandant of the cavalry regiment of Ciudad Rodrigo, co-operated ably with him, and the French suffered daily and hourly losses from their indefatigable activity. They suffered also greatly from the artillery of the town, which was excellently served. Ney carried on his operations in a manner which the Spaniards thought prodigal of the lives of his men, beginning his approaches where, in their judgment, a general more sparing of his army would have terminated

*Marshal
Ney summons the
town.*

CHAP. them. To protect these works, he ordered a great number of
 XXXI. holes to be dug, where he posted sharpshooters, by whom the
 1810. garrison were greatly annoyed. On the 24th of June, Massena
June. arrived and took the command, and at three on the following
 morning the batteries opened, and a constant fire from six-and-
 forty pieces of heavy artillery was kept up day and night till the
 evening of the 28th, when, having made a breach of about five-
 and-twenty yards in length, Ney required the governor to sur-
 render, "sending him," he said, "this last summons by order
 of the Prince of Essling, commander-in-chief of the army of
 Portugal, then present, whose honour and humanity were well
 known, but who, if the defence were uselessly prolonged, would
 be compelled to treat him with all the rigour authorized by the
 laws of war. If he had any hope of being succoured by the
 English, he was doubtless by that time undeceived; for if such
 had been their intention, they would not have waited till the
 city was reduced to its present deplorable state. He had, there-
 fore, to choose between an honourable capitulation, and the
 terrible vengeance of a victorious army; and a positive answer
 was requested." Herrasti replied, "that after forty-nine years'
 service, he could not but know the laws of war and his military
 duties; the fortress was not in a state to capitulate; and when-
 ever circumstances made it his duty, he would then apply for
 terms, after securing his honour, which was dearer to him than
 life."

*Situation of
 Lord Wel-
 lington.*

How galling it must have been for Lord Wellington to witness
 the progress of the siege, knowing his inability to relieve the
 town, may well be conceived. His outposts were near enough
 to hear even the musketry; but with so large a proportion of his
 troops half-disciplined and untried, he could not act upon the
 offensive against an enemy greatly superior in numbers, without
 incurring the most imminent danger. The only possible plan

by which Portugal could be saved he had laid down for himself, and from that plan no circumstances, however painful to his own feelings, or however derogatory in appearance to his reputation, could induce him to swerve. He was in communication with Romana at Badajoz ; but in the state of the Spanish armies, any plan of co-operation for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo was impossible. It was, however, of great importance that the place should be resolutely defended to the last extremity, and in this hope Romana and the English general were not disappointed. The minds of the people had been prepared for this extremity ; they had their patriotic writers and their poets ; the exploits of Julian Sanchez excited the emulation of the youth, and the conduct of the old governor gave confidence to all. The examples of Zaragoza, and Gerona, and Hostalrich, and Astorga, animated the women and children, as well as those who bore arms ; for in a cause like theirs they had seen their countrymen acquire a glory when unsuccessful, which could not have been greater had they been victorious. The women and children, when they saw their houses burning, gave way neither to fear nor lamentation, but exerted themselves to quench the flames, and carried refreshment and ammunition to the troops amid the hottest fire. There were two blind beggars in the city : no one supposed that these unfortunate men could render any service during the siege, but zeal taught them how to be serviceable ; they carried water to the walls by day, and ammunition by night, with such unwearied activity, that it was the intention of the governor and the Junta, if the town had been saved, to have rewarded them with pensions for life.

It was of great consequence to the Spaniards to keep possession of those buildings without the walls, which would otherwise afford protection to the besiegers, but which also afforded such means for annoying them while they could be defended, that it had not

CHAP.
XXXI.

1810.

June.

*Spirit of the
inhabitants.*

*The nun-
nery of S.
Cruz at-
tacked.*

CHAP. been thought advisable to demolish them before the siege. The
 XXXI. nunnery of Santa Cruz was the most important of these buildings.
 1810. D. Ramon Castellanos was posted there with a company of sixty
July. men, when three hundred of the enemy's grenadiers, with a party
 of sappers, assailed it in the night, half the party attacking it
 in the rear, the other in the front. They blew up the first and
 second gates; hand grenades were thrown on both sides; the
 Spaniards, having the advantage of the building, kept up a most
 destructive discharge of musketry; the commander of the one
 party was killed, the captain of engineers, who commanded the
 other, wounded, but he did not retire till he had set fire to the
 convent. Seeing the flames, the governor made signal for Cas-
 tellanos to abandon the post, who accordingly let down his men
 from a window into one of the inner courts of the convent, and
 descending himself the last, they forced their way with the
 bayonet. It was a little after midnight when they reached the
 gate of La Colada; but seeing, while they took food and rested
 after the action, that the enemy had extinguished the flames,
 Castellanos went to the governor, and represented to him that
 his honour was concerned in recovering the post. He led his
 men at three in the morning, after only two hours' respite, to
 the assault, and surprising the French, drove them from their
 dearly purchased conquest, where they left 158 dead, and 45
 wounded behind them, the remainder of the wounded having
 been removed during the short time that they retained possession.

*Convent of
 St. Domingo
 recovered.*

July 2.

They were driven from the convent of St. Domingo in a
 manner not less worthy of remembrance. After they had won
 the building, Herrasti was very desirous of recovering it, and
 yet hesitated at giving orders for the attempt, knowing the ex-
 hausted state of the garrison, and how ill any loss of men could
 be afforded. A serjeant, by name Manuel Martin, happened to
 hear what was the state of the governor's feelings upon this sub-

ject. This man, who was a native of Zamora, had made himself well known to the French: they called him *agua y vino*, water and wine, the words which he always used when engaged in action with them; wine being his signal for attack, and water that for retreat. He had distinguished himself greatly during the siege, and had at this time a wound in his arm, which however did not prevent him from going to the governor, and soliciting permission to make an attack upon the enemy in this convent, saying, that if he could not drive them out, at least he could annoy them there. Accordingly, choosing out five-and-twenty comrades, he attacked the convent with such well-directed vigour, that the enemy, though greatly superior in numbers, were terrified and took to flight, many of them leaving their knapsacks and muskets behind them. This was so signal an exploit, that Manuel Martin was deservedly promoted for it, and a badge of distinction was given to each of the soldiers.

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XXXI.
1810.
July.

But against such a force as surrounded them, all that the Spaniards could do was to hold out to the uttermost, and sell the fortress as dearly as possible. Massena boasted of having 100,000 men in the field; he had 66,000 infantry and 6000 horse, of whom as many as could be advantageously employed carried on the siege, while the others kept the British army in check, Lord Wellington having only 51,000 under his command, including 3000 cavalry, and half this force composed of Portuguese, who were as yet untried, and consequently in whom little reliance could then be placed. They were, however, brigaded with the British in the proportion of one battalion to two, and were every day acquiring confidence and character. The siege was less murderous than that of Zaragoza, because the city was much smaller and less populous, and, having the advantage of regular works, did not require the same kind of defence. When Herrasti and the Junta saw that it was not possible to hold out

Julian Sanchez effects his escape from the city

CHAP. much longer, they ordered Julian Sanchez and his lancers to
 XXXI. make their escape while it was yet practicable, reminding San-
 1810. chez how important it was that his services should still be con-
 July. tinued, and telling him he would be of more assistance to Ciudad
 Rodrigo in the field than he could now be within the walls. A
 little before midnight Sanchez collected his troops in the plaza;
 the two of his company who were married men took their wives
 behind them: they sallied out, and their leader, in the spirit of
 Scanderbeg, instead of contenting himself with merely effecting
 his own retreat, charged a post of cavalry, routed them, and
 carried away eight prisoners with their horses. The two women
 were armed with pistols, and one of them, by name Marta Fraile,
 saved her husband, by shooting a dragoon who was about to
 attack him on one side.

*State of the
 British
 army.*

The British army meantime, though it could render no as-
 sistance, was far from being idly or ill employed. There had
 been a prevailing feeling of despondency before the siege began,
 and an expectation that the town would surrender as soon as the
 enemy should have opened their fire. The progress of the siege
 produced more respect for the Spaniards, and the active service
 in which the men soon found themselves engaged produced cheer-
 fulness and hope. The picquets occupied the line of the Azava
 from Carpio on the right to its junction with the Agueda; the
 enemy had 8000 men on the left bank of the Agueda, behind
 that river and the Azava, which was fordable in many places.
 The head-quarters of the light division, under Major-General
 Craufurd, were at Gallegos, a short league distant, in an open
 country; the greatest alertness, therefore, was necessary, and
 the men slept at their horses' heads, the horses bridled and
 the reins in hand. The Germans were selected for the out-
 post duty, being at that time the only troops in the army who
 were acquainted with it: the 16th light dragoons requested to be

intermixed with them on duty, men and officers; a compliment which gratified the brave men to whom it was paid, and the greatest harmony was always preserved. The picquets were brought to the greatest perfection, and the division soon attained that alertness which could only be learnt in such service. The Portuguese behaved well on the first opportunity which was afforded, and obtained the good opinion of their allies; so that every thing went on satisfactorily in the allied army, except that in a trifling and ill-executed affair Colonel Talbot fell, a gallant officer, who had distinguished himself at Talavera, and was deservedly and greatly lamented.

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1810.
July.

The French general, to whom time was of more consequence than any cost of lives, pressed the siege with the utmost vigour, but with heavy loss, owing to the repeated sallies of the garrison, and the excellent manner in which the artillery of the Spaniards was served. In hope of forcing the governor to surrender by the cries of the inhabitants, he bombarded the town, and almost destroyed it; but the people were not to be shaken in their purpose, the names of Numantia and Zaragoza were in every mouth, and they were resolved in their turn to transmit a memorable example to posterity. Meantime the regular advances of the besiegers were carried on without intermission, and by the 2d of July a practicable breach had been opened in the Baluarte del Rey. The Spaniards made every exertion to defend it with sacks of earth, estacades, and whatever other obstacles they could oppose to the enemy; but the French did not yet venture an assault; they had so severely experienced the valour of their opponents, that they had determined not to storm the town till the works should be reduced to such a state, that they might avail themselves of the whole advantage of their numbers. They made three mines, one under the counterscarp, the other two under the curtain of the wall and part of the Calle del Seminario, or

A practicable breach made.

CHAP. College-street, near the Cathedral. The besieged were aware
 XXXI. of their progress, but all efforts at impeding it were useless, and
 1810. at three in the morning of the 10th, the counterscarp was blown
July. up, forming not only an open breach, but such a way to it that
 carts might ascend from the glacis.

Immediately afterwards the French renewed the fire from all their batteries, and kept it up without intermission for twelve hours. During this time the cry of the soldiers and the inhabitants, women and boys, as well as their husbands and fathers, was, that they would beat off the enemy or die ; but the officers and the Junta were well aware, that any farther resistance would only afford the French a pretext for carrying their threats into execution, and putting all to the sword. Thirty thousand men were ready to storm the city that evening. It was not without much difficulty that the people could be induced to hear of a council of war, nor would they have suffered one to be held, had they not seen such undoubted proofs of the patriotism and courage of those who now told them that a surrender was become inevitable. There were some in the council who proposed to follow the example of Julian Estrada at Hostalrich, and force their way with the bayonet through their enemies ; but here, as at Astorga, it was urged that they were in different circumstances, and had therefore different duties ; their business now was to preserve 5000 inhabitants, who would else be exposed to the unrestrained vengeance and brutality of the enemy. Finally, it was resolved to capitulate, but not till the latest moment, when there was no longer the slightest hope or possibility of relief.

*The town
 capitulates.
 July 10.*

Massena's orders to Ney were to assault the town that evening ; the French advanced for this purpose, and were at the foot of the breach, in the act of mounting, when the white flag was hoisted : the officer who planted it in the breach descended with the terms of capitulation, and presented them to Ney, who

sternly told him it was now too late for any thing. The Spaniard, however, had recourse to Massena, who was at that time supposed to be more humane than Ney. The first article was, that the garrison should march out with the honours of war; the rest were in like manner such as are usual in the like circumstances. Massena having cast his eye over them, said, "Tell your governor, this is no time to ratify the terms in writing; but I grant all which he requires, and am going to give orders accordingly." He then sent his adjutant-general to bid Ney suspend the assault. Loison immediately marched through the breach, and took possession of the town; and General Simon, notwithstanding Massena's pledged word, made the garrison deposit their arms in the arsenal.

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XXXI.
1810.
July.

The other terms were at the moment fulfilled; and when Herrasti, the next day, requested that the capitulation might be signed, in order that he might transmit it to his own government, Massena replied, that as he saw the articles observed, he neither could nor ought to require more. The people had escaped the horrors of an assault; but in other respects they soon found they were at the mercy of a conqueror who acknowledged no other law than his own pleasure. Herrasti had stipulated for the liberty of the civil officers; they, however, were declared prisoners of war. The members of the Junta were thrown into the vilest dungeon of the public gaol, from whence, after having endured for eight-and-forty hours every kind of insult and ill treatment, they were marched on foot to Salamanca, in company with the governor, who alone was permitted to retain his horse. The clergy were arrested and shut up for two days in the church of St. Juan; the old and infirm were then suffered to go to their houses, but forbidden the exercise of their functions; the lay brethren were ordered to serve in the hospitals, and all the others sent prisoners to Salamanca. The next measures were, to impose a

*Conduct of
the French.*

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July.

contribution of 1,800,000 reales, and to set from six to eight hundred men at work to destroy the batteries, fill up the trenches, and repair the works, compelling them to labour like slaves, giving them no provisions, and allowing them little rest.

The account which the French published of their conquest was, according to their system, full of falsehoods. They asserted that the garrison had surrendered at discretion, which could only be contradicted, not disproved, because Massena had broken his word. This falsehood is worthy of remark, because it shows so strikingly the characteristic baseness of Buonaparte's generals. Ciudad Rodrigo was evidently at their mercy; a generous enemy would have rejoiced to show his sense of the merits of those who had opposed him, and would have known that in refusing them the honours of war, he deprived them only of a barren form; for the merit of their gallant and heroic defence it was not in his power to efface. Massena, not satisfied with thus injuring Herrasti's honour, cast upon him a fouler aspersion, making him say, that he and the garrison would have surrendered sooner, if they had not been intimidated by the inhabitants. In reality, such had been the noble spirit of the soldiers, that it was only by the entreaties, as well as the arguments of the superior Junta of Castille, whose residence was in that city, that they were prevailed upon to give up their intention of attempting to cut their way through the besiegers. The French general did not forget to insult the English, and endeavour by his falsehoods to exasperate the Spaniards against them. "Ciudad Rodrigo," he said, "fell in their presence; they promised to succour it; made the inhabitants prolong their defence by this deceitful hope; and suffered the place to fall without making the slightest effort for its relief. Thus they had excited against them the universal indignation of the garrison and the people, who united in exclaiming against their perfidy."

This justice, however, Massena did to Ciudad Rodrigo, that he admitted the defence had been most obstinate. It was impossible, he said, to form an idea of the state to which it was reduced. Every thing had been battered down; not a single house remained uninjured. The killed he estimated at more than 2000. The Spaniards stated it at only sixty-three of the inhabitants, and 237 of the garrison. Seven thousand soldiers, he said, laid down their arms: . . . the number at the commencement of the siege was 4950. Six hundred made their escape on the night of the capitulation, and more than 1500 before they reached Salamanca. Above two-and-forty thousand shells were thrown into the city, and nearly five-and-twenty thousand from it. The quantity of powder consumed by the garrison during the last sixteen days was 893 quintales, . . . the quintal being 132 lbs. The French gave no statement of their own loss; it was probably very considerable; the Spaniards estimated it at 3400. The capture, however, occasioned the greatest exultation in Paris, and the *Moniteur* mingled with its own insults the echoes of our factious journalists. "The good sense of the English people," it said, "enabling them to foresee the dishonour and destruction of their army in Portugal, they are convinced that the most fortunate event which could befall it would be a catastrophe like that of Moore's. They are too much accustomed to calculate chances and events not to know, that alone against France they can, in such a contest, meet nothing but disaster, and obtain nothing but disgrace." "Men of sound judgement, like Grenville or Grey, are numerous in England," said the *Moniteur*, "but they are at present without any influence there." Then, returning to its natural tone of insult, it ridiculed the strength of Lord Wellington's army, amounting to the dreadful number of 24,000 English. "The cries of the inhabitants of Ciudad Rodrigo," it said, "were heard in his camp, which was only six

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July.*Speculations
upon the
campaign.*

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leagues distant: but all ears were shut against them; the English made no attempt to succour that city: . . they were the laughing-stock of Europe; every coffee-house waiter knew their weakness on land, as well as their influence at sea. Ciudad Rodrigo was one of the last bulwarks of the insurrection; its capture made the catastrophe more imminent for England, who would now find it necessary to call to the helm more prudent men, better acquainted with the nature of the resources and of the strength of their country, and therefore more moderate."

In England, too, we were told, that if Ciudad Rodrigo were taken, the efforts of the English might be considered to be at an end; the French would then be able to advance without fear of a check; the harvest also being now begun, whatever grain there was in the country they would be able to secure for themselves, and so form magazines, the want of which had hitherto chiefly retarded their advance. At one time these politicians cried out, "that Lord Wellington could not permit the enemy quietly to prosecute the siege of so important a fortress." At another, "they would not suppose him capable of fighting a useless battle: for they trusted he was not so prodigal of the blood of his followers. They trusted that his operations would be justified by the event." Then again "they were not competent to speak from their own knowledge, yet certainly it did appear a doubtful policy to be patiently waiting till Massena had time to concentrate his troops, and make all his arrangements for an attack on the British position." "The plan of overwhelming Lord Wellington, by bringing an immense superiority to bear upon him, was one which obviously presented itself; there seemed no insurmountable difficulty in the execution; obstacles there might be, from want of provisions and other circumstances, but the skill and perseverance of the French in combating them forbade us to place much reliance upon such grounds." In this

manner, always presaging evil, and consistent in nothing but despondency, sometimes borrowing the tone of the *Moniteur*, and sometimes setting it, did these journalists of a disappointed party labour to deaden the hearts and hopes of their countrymen; while their more daring, but hardly more mischievous, coadjutors addressed their weekly invectives to the readers and auditors in pot-houses and tap-rooms, abusing their ignorance, appealing to, and inflaming their worst passions, and crying out against the measures of their own government, while upon the crimes of Buonaparte they observed a silence which sufficiently indicated their sympathy with his system, their wishes for the extension of his tyranny, and their hopes of his eventual success.

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The fall of Ciudad Rodrigo enabled Massena to detach a force for the relief of Astorga, where General Mahy, who commanded in Galicia, was blockading the French garrison. This object was easily effected. General Taboada at this time occupied Puebla de Sanabria, where he was exerting himself to organize a body of troops for the field: General Echavarria was engaged in like manner at Alcañizas. In such feeble, uncombined efforts the spirit of the country was spent, and its resources frittered away; for as soon as men enough were brought together to attract the enemy's attention, they were either dispersed or destroyed. This was the fate of Echavarria's corps; it was surprised by a French detachment under General La Croix, and nearly annihilated. The alarm spread to Silveira's head-quarters at Braganza, and Colonel Wilson (his second in command) hastened with the advanced guard to Echavarria's support; but he arrived only to find the ground covered with dead and wounded Spaniards, the enemy having retired to Carvales, after completely accomplishing the purpose of their expedition. Massena boasted soon afterwards of a like success at Sanabria; but the results

*La Puebla
de Sanabria
occupied by
the French.*

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were very different. The French magnified the importance of this post, saying that it commanded the entrance into Portugal, and shut up the communication with Galicia. They said also, that Lord Wellington had enjoined the Spanish governor to make an obstinate defence; but that the governor reproached him in reply for having deceived the commandant of Ciudad Rodrigo, and broken his word with him; told him it was evident he intended to do nothing for Spain, but only, for the sake of fomenting divisions, held out hopes of assistance which were never realized; yet nevertheless offered to shut himself up in the fortress, and bury himself in its ruins, if the English general would send him one Englishman for two Spaniards, to assist in its defence. The answer of Lord Wellington, the French papers said, might easily be conceived; and the Spanish general therefore abandoned the town, where General Serras found twenty pieces of artillery, and provisions for 3000 men for six months. After this the French made no farther mention of the Puebla de Sanabria.

*The Portuguese re-
take it.*

July 29.

Aug. 3.

D. Francisco Taboada Gil, the officer who was thus falsely represented as insulting the English general, had communicated not with him but with the Portuguese commander, Silveira, at Braganza, with whom it was agreed that he should evacuate the place if it were attacked by a superior force. Taboada accordingly fell back upon the Portillas de Galicia; Silveira, having ascertained that Serras had returned with the greater part of his troops to Mombuey, concerted measures with the Spanish general for surprising the garrison which the French had left in Sanabria, and on the fourth day after they had taken possession of their boasted conquest, the enemy found themselves invested in the fort. They were summoned; but the commander replied, that he had men and ammunition to defend himself with, and that he expected speedily to be succoured by Marshal Mas-

sena. On the following morning a detachment of about seventy French cavalry came on to attack the advanced guard of the Portugueze, under Captain Francisco Texeira Lobo, whose force was about equal ; but while he charged them in front, another small party of Portugueze, by his instructions, wheeled round and attacked them in the rear: they were instantly broken, and twenty-eight were left upon the field, thirty prisoners, and forty horses taken. The remainder of that day was spent in vain endeavours to force an entrance into the fort: the assailants burnt the gates, but the enemy blocked them up effectually with stones; the Portugueze and Spaniards then got possession of a house adjoining, from whence they attempted to make a way through, but the enemy soon battered it down. On the morrow, one mortar and one three-pounder were planted against them; the first became useless after a few discharges, and Silveira, the next morning, sent for a six-pounder from Braganza. He was now apprized that Serras was advancing in force to relieve the garrison. Silveira left the Spaniards to maintain the blockade, and drew up in order of battle upon the river Tera; but Serras, having reconnoitred his force, thought proper to retire upon Mombuey. The six-pounder, from Braganza, was an iron gun, in such a state, that when it arrived it was of no avail; and a twelve-pounder, which on the 8th was brought from the same place, proved in the same condition: this was a serious disappointment, for Silveira was now apprized that Serras was collecting reinforcements. Six hundred horse had entered Zamora, on their way to him, and two battalions of Italian troops were joining him from Benevente, Leon, and Astorga. Unable to batter the place, because of the wretched state of his artillery, which had been long left to rust in a dilapidated fortress, he tried the effect of mining; here experience and skill were wanting, and only the face of the curtain was thrown down. The garrison,

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1810.

August.

Aug. 9.

CHAP. however, who were Swiss, dreaded that a second attempt might
 XXXI. prove more successful; and their commandant, pleading that
 1810. he and his men were not French, proposed and obtained good
 August. terms, delivering up the place on condition that they should
 be allowed to embark from Coruña, and return to their own
 country, on their parole, not to bear arms against the allied
 powers. The artillery of the place, and the stores, were re-
 stored to the Spaniards; but Silveira retained for the Portuguese
 an eagle, the first which they had taken from their enemy. Sixty
 of the Swiss entered into the service of the allies.

Serras was in sight of Silveira's advanced posts when this
 capitulation was concluded; he had with him from 4000 to 5000
 foot, and about 800 cavalry. The allied Portuguese and Span-
 iards were inferior in number, and still more in discipline, and
 with this unequal force pressing hard upon them they broke up
 from Sanabria, at a time when the prisoners were come three
 hours march on the way to Coruña. Colonel Wilson, who had
 been ordered on an important duty to head-quarters, returned
 in time to assume the command of the rear-guard, and with it
 cover their retrograde movement. He checked the French in a
 sharp affair of cavalry, after which he took the open road to
 Braganza, Silveira retreating with the foot upon the heights of
 Calabor, where the enemy, if they should continue the pursuit,
 could derive no advantage from their horse. But having arrived
 too late for saving the garrison, they advanced no farther than
 Pedralva, and from thence returned to Sanabria, then to Mom-
 buey. This was the termination of General Serras's success at
 the Puebla de Sanabria; the whole of the garrison which he
 left there were taken prisoners, and the eagle which was taken
 with them was deposited with proper triumph in the cathedral
 at Lisbon, as the first trophy of the regenerated Portuguese.]

CHAPTER XXXII.

CAPTURE OF ALMEIDA. CONDUCT OF THE PORTUGUEZE GOVERNMENT. BATTLE OF BUSACO. RETREAT OF THE BRITISH AND PORTUGUEZE TO THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS. THE KING'S ILLNESS.

FROM Ciudad Rodrigo Massena addressed a proclamation 1810.
to the Portuguese. "Inhabitants of Portugal," he said, "the ^{July.}
Emperor of the French has put under my orders an army of ^{Massena's}
110,000 men, to take possession of this kingdom, and to expel ^{proclama-}
the English, your pretended friends. Against you he has no ^{tion to the}
enmity: on the contrary, it is his highest wish to promote your ^{Portuguese.}
happiness, and the first step for securing it is to dismiss from the
country those locusts who consume your property, blast your
harvests, and palsy your efforts. In opposing the Emperor, you
oppose your true friend; a friend who has it in his power to
render you the happiest people in the world. Were it not for
the insidious counsels of England, you might now have enjoyed
peace and tranquillity, and have been put in possession of that
happiness. You have blindly rejected offers calculated only to
promote your benefit, and have accepted proposals which will
long be the curse of Portugal. His majesty has commissioned
me to conjure you that you would awake to your true interests;
that you would awake to those prospects which, with your con-
sent, may be quickly realized; awake so as to distinguish between
friends and enemies. The King of England is actuated by selfish

CHAP. and narrow purposes ; the Emperor of the French is governed
 XXXII. by principles of universal philanthropy. The English have put
 1810. arms into your hands, arms which you know not how to use : I
July. will instruct you. They are to be the instruments of annihilation
 to your foes : . . and who those foes are I have already shown.
 Use them as you ought, and they will become your salvation !
 Use them as you ought not, and they will prove your destruction !
 Resistance is vain. Can the feeble army of the British general
 expect to oppose the victorious legions of the Emperor ? Already
 a force is collected, sufficient to overwhelm your country. Snatch
 the moment that mercy and generosity offer ! As friends you
 may respect us, and be respected in return ; as foes you must
 dread us, and in the conflict must be subdued. The choice is
 your own, either to meet the horrors of a bloody war, and see your
 country desolated, your villages in flames, your cities plundered ;
 or to accept an honourable and happy peace, which will obtain
 for you every blessing that by resistance you would resign for
 ever."

*The French
 invest Al-
 meida.*

On the same day that Ciudad Rodrigo surrendered, the enemy's cavalry appeared on the plains of Almeida. Lord Wellington's head-quarters at this time were at Alverca : his position was a defensive line, about thirty miles in extent, along the frontier mountains of Beira ; but as the line formed a segment of a circle, the points were not distant from each other in proportion to its length. The infantry extended from Celorico to Guarda on the one side, and to Fort Conception, one of the out-works of Almeida, on the other. The cavalry were in advance near Fort Conception, and at Sabugal, and on the Coa. The enemy's superiority in horse was very great, but the nature of the ground deprived them of the advantage which this must otherwise have given them. They now proceeded to invest Almeida. The operations of the siege were conducted by the

second corps, under Marshal Ney. Junot, with the 8th, had his head-quarters at S. Felices, and his cavalry at Villar de Porco, Fuente Guinaldo, and Fuentes d'Onoro, ground which had not then been rendered memorable in military history. While this portion of the army covered the siege, Serras with a division of 7000 men at Benevente threatened Tras os Montes, and Bonnet with 8000 at Astorga was ready to enter Galicia and the province of Entre Douro e Minho.

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Dumouriez, forgetting Elvas at the time, has called Almeida *Almeida.* the strongest place in Portugal. It is perhaps more important from its situation, but very far inferior to it in strength. This town was founded by the Moors, and is said to have been one of those which Ferrando the Great won from them while the Cid served under him, in his first wars. When the tide of success was for a while turned by the entrance of the Almoravides into Spain, Talmayda, as it was then called, fell again into the hands of the misbelievers, from whom it was finally reconquered, in 1190, by King Sancho I. of Portugal. Payo Guterres, distinguishing himself in the conquest, obtained from it the appellation of *O Almeydam*, the Almeydan, and transmitted to his descendants the surname of Almeyda, conspicuous in Portuguese and Indian history, but disgraced at this time by the representative of the family, who was then engaged in Massena's army as a traitor. King Diniz, the ruins of whose magnificent works are to be seen in every part of Portugal, rebuilt the city, and is supposed to have removed it from a valley, a little way north of its present site. The castle was built by him, and repaired by King Emanuel. In the later wars between Spain and Portugal, Almeida has always been considered a place of great importance, being the bulwark of the latter country on its most accessible side; but, like other things of more essential consequence to the strength of a kingdom, it had long been neglected. In 1809

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August.

*Fort Con-
ception
abandoned.*

there were not a dozen gun-carriages fit for service, nor any wood in store for the construction of others; the embrasures were falling to decay, and the palisades of the covert-way had been mostly broken, or carried away for fire-wood. The works were originally ill constructed, and the place had the great disadvantage of being commanded on one side by a hill. Its population in 1747 was 2463; and Almeida is not one of the few places in Portugal which have been progressive since that time.

The same causes which rendered it impossible for Lord Wellington to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo, made it necessary for him to leave Almeida to its own means of defence; but the works had been repaired, the garrison was strong, and Brigadier Cox, an English officer in the Portuguese service, was appointed to the command. With the example of Ciudad Rodrigo before it, there was no reason to doubt that Almeida would make a vigorous resistance, and probably hold out so long as materially to derange the plans of the enemy. Fort Conception was abandoned and blown up at the enemy's approach. General Craufurd, however, continued to occupy a position near Almeida with 3200 British and 1100 Portuguese troops, eight squadrons of cavalry included. The chain of his cavalry outposts formed a semicircle in front of the town, their right flank resting on the Coa, near As Naves, about three miles above this fortress, and their left, in like manner, resting upon the same river, about three miles below it, near Cinco Villas. The centre was covered by a small stream, and on the right and centre, where it was expected that the enemy would advance, the cavalry posts were supported by piquets of infantry. There was but one road by which the artillery and cavalry could retreat, that leading from Almeida to the bridge, which is about a mile west of the town. The nature of the ground made it difficult for the enemy to approach this road on the left of the allies, and on the south the infantry were placed

to cover it, having their right flank resting on the Coa above the bridge, their front covered by a deep rocky ravine, and their left in some enclosures near a * windmill, on the plain, about 800 yards south of the town.

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1810.

July.

*Affair on
the Coa.*

On the morning of July 24th, the centre of the British line of piquets was attacked; they were supported by the 14th light dragoons and two guns, but were withdrawn when a considerable column of the enemy appeared with artillery, and began to form on the other side of the rivulet. The force which Marshal Ney, who directed these movements, brought into the field, consisted of 20,000 foot and between 3000 and 4000 horse, being in fact his whole corps. Fifteen squadrons of cavalry crossed the rivulet as soon as the piquets retired, and formed with artillery in front, and about 7000 infantry on their right; other troops meantime were advancing upon the right of the British position, the side on which they might best expect to cut off the retreat of the allies to the bridge. General Craufurd now perceived that it was impossible for him to prevent the investment of Almeida, and that he was on the wrong side of the Coa. The artillery and cavalry were therefore ordered to retreat along the only road which was practicable for them; the infantry from the left to move off in *echelon*; the right it was necessary to hold till the last, to prevent the enemy from approaching the bridge by a road coming from Junca, which runs in the bottom of the valley by the river side.

On the left, the men had to retreat through thick vineyards, intersected with deep trenches, and with walls six or seven feet high; they could not take advantage of this ground, for the

* Upon this windmill the governor intended to mount a gun, and the gun was lying in it, but not as yet mounted, and consequently useless; another dismounted gun was lying near the mill. These guns of course could be of no use in the action which ensued, but they figured in Marshal Massena's account of it.

CHAP. extreme danger had acted with promptitude and success, were
 XXXI. the men in whom they had least confided. Alburquerque they
 1810. had regarded with jealousy, and Romana they had deprived of
 his command in deference to the deputies of Asturias.

*Badajoz se-
 cured by
 Romana.*

The service which Romana had rendered at that crisis was only of less importance than the preservation of the Isle of Leon. He had secured Badajoz when a corps of 12,000 men from Seville thought to have obtained possession of it by a coup-de-main: some Portugeze had come to his assistance, and their artillery-men distinguished themselves when the enemy ventured to approach the walls. Baffled in this attempt, the French retired to Merida, Zafra, and S. Marta, where they were annoyed by the division of his army under D. Carlos O'Donnell, brother to the commander in Catalonia.

*The British
 take a posi-
 tion on the
 frontiers of
 Beira.*

Lord Wellington had nearly 9000 sick when his head-quarters were removed from Badajoz; but when, in clear anticipation of the enemy's intentions, he took a position on the frontiers of Beira, they rapidly recovered strength in that salubrious country. On the side of Alentejo he knew that the invasion would not be attempted; attempts in that quarter had always proved unsuccessful: if Badajoz and Elvas had been reduced, Lisbon was secured by the Tagus, and there is no other part of Portugal in which an army would suffer so much from disease, and from want of water; this indeed Loison had experienced. On the side of Galicia the French had so lately felt how difficult it was to retreat, that it was altogether unlikely they would risk the same danger again, even if it had not been necessary again to obtain possession of that province as a preliminary measure. It appeared certain, therefore, that the attempt would be made by way of Beira, the only remaining and most practicable route for an invading army. Their first step must be to besiege Ciudad Rodrigo. This, he knew, had been recommended by a council

*See vol. i.
 p. 537.*

of war held in September at Salamanca ; and its success, he then observed, would do more evil than the French could effect in any other way ; for it would cut off the only communication of the Spanish government with the northern provinces, give the enemy the command of Castille, and probably draw after it the loss of Almeida. Looking, therefore, to Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida as the points of which the enemy must obtain possession before they could march either upon Lisbon or Porto, he chose a position in the segment of a circle, of which the convex part was opposed to the quarter from whence the invasion was expected. Guarda, Celorico, Pinhel, and the west bank of the Coa, were its four main points ; the Coa, with its tributary streams, flowing in front of his line along the greater part of its extent. That river rises in the Sierra de Xalma, which is a part of the Serra da Gata, and enters Portugal by Folgoso ; another stream, which is also regarded as its source, rises near Sabugal ; it receives many smaller rivers, and falls into the Douro near Villa Nova de Foscoa. Its waters are supposed to be excellent for dying wool and tempering steel, but unwholesome.

Before the French entered upon their operations in this quarter, they thought it necessary to obtain complete possession of Leon, that their communication might be open with Valladolid. They had been repulsed in an attempt upon Astorga, in the preceding September, by Santocildes, who remained as governor there. That city was surrounded with walls, which gave it an appearance of antiquity, not of strength. They had been erected many centuries ago, and were so massive, and at the same time considered as of so little consequence for purposes of defence, that the poor were permitted to dig holes in them which served for habitations. The garrison consisted of about 3000 men, of whom from 500 to 600 were on the hospital list. Some attempts had been made to render the city defensible, according

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1810.

*Astorga
summoned
by the
French.*

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XXXI.

1810.

Feb. 16.

*Siege of
Astorga.*

to the system of modern warfare, by the enemy, after Buonaparte entered it in pursuit of Sir J. Moore; and when the Spaniards recovered it, they added to these works. Still the fortifications were such, that though the French might deem them sufficient against an armed peasantry, or a guerrilla party, it was never expected that any resistance would be made there against a regular force. After the French had overrun Andalusia, and when they were proclaiming, that the brigands had been put to the sword, and the Napoleonic throne established in Cadiz, . . for this falsehood was in such phrase asserted in their Spanish gazettes, . . Loison, whose head-quarters were at Bañeza, the nearest town, wrote to the governor, telling him, that King Joseph had entered Seville amid the acclamations of the inhabitants; that Andalusia had submitted; the Junta was dissolved; and almost all the people of Spain, awakened now to a sense of their true interest, had had recourse to the clemency of their sovereign, who received them like a father. He urged Santocildes to imitate so good an example, and appoint a place where they might meet and confer upon such terms as must needs persuade him to this wise and honourable course. Santocildes replied to this overture, that he knew his duty, and would do it.

On the 21st of March, Junot invested Astorga with 12,000 men, of whom about a tenth part were cavalry, by means of which he became master of the open country. The vigorous measures of Santocildes obstructed his operations so much, that a month elapsed before he opened his batteries. They began on three sides at once, at daybreak on the 20th of April, and soon effected a breach on the north, by the Puerta de Hierro; but immediately behind the breach the Spaniards pulled down a house, the foundations of which served as a formidable trench; they kept up their fire during the night, and at eleven the following morning Junot once more summoned the governor to

surrender, declaring that, if he held out two hours longer, the city should be stormed, and the garrison put to the sword. The governor having returned a becoming answer, the batteries renewed their fire; the bombardment was recommenced; the cathedral was set on fire, with many other houses, and a whole street in the suburbs; and the French, thinking to profit by the confusion, assaulted the breach: 2000 men were appointed for this service: great part perished before they could reach the wall; the remainder mounted the breach; the works within impeded them, a destructive fire was poured upon them, and after an hour and a half they were repulsed. At the same time the suburb was assaulted, and with the same success; the enemy being three times baffled in their attempts. Their loss this day amounted to 1500 men.

Had the city been well stored, it would have cost the besiegers still dearer; but after this signal success, Santocildes found himself with only thirty round of cartridges remaining for the men, and eight only for the artillery. Junot passed the night in making a covered way from the trenches to the foot of the breach, where he lodged a large body of picked men. Meantime a council of war was held; the impossibility of resisting with advantage for want of ammunition was admitted; some officers proposed that they should cut their way through the besiegers; . . the strength of the enemy's cavalry was one impediment to this, but it was rejected on account of the inhabitants; for Astorga was not like Hostalrich, where the garrison had only themselves to provide for; and unless terms were made for the town's-people, what they might expect from such conquerors as Junot and Loison was but too well known. Fresh works of defence were thrown up within the breach while this deliberation was going on, that nothing might be omitted, and at daybreak a capitulation was proposed. They demanded and obtained the honours

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XXXI.
1810.
March.

*Its sur-
render.*

CHAP. of war for themselves ; security for the inhabitants, both in per-
 XXXI. son and property ; that the men should keep their knapsacks,
 1810. and the officers their horses, swords, and baggage. This part
March. of the capitulation was broken, and the officers were plundered
 as they left the town. Even Junot, however, returned Santocildes his sword, saying, that so brave a man ought not to be without one. In the course of the siege the enemy lost 2500 in killed alone ; so dearly was Astorga purchased. But the more gallant its resistance, the more was that misconduct to be regretted which had infected the provincial Juntas as strongly as the Central Government. Since July last Galicia had been entirely delivered from the enemy ; the population of that province, when the census of 1797 was taken, amounted to nearly a million and a half ; the people had shown their spirit, and if due exertions had been made on the part of the civil and military authorities, an army might have been formed there, capable not only of preserving Astorga, but of essentially co-operating with the British and Portuguese in the subsequent operations.

*Affair at
 Barba del
 Puerco.*

March 19.

After this conquest, Junot, leaving a small garrison in Astorga, marched into Old Castille, where Ney had previously been joined by the corps of Loison, Regnier, and Kellermann. The campaign had already begun here. In the beginning of March the French army were upon the Tormes, with their advanced posts upon the Agueda. Lord Wellington was at Viseu, and his advanced posts, under General Craufurd, were upon the Agueda also, and between that river and the Coa. The first time that the British and French troops met after the battle of Talavera was in an affair of outposts, at Barba del Puerco : four companies of the 85th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Beckwith, were posted at that place ; the French had a strong party immediately opposite, on the other side the Agueda, in the village of St. Felices. The only bridge below Ciudad Rodrigo is between these villages,

and as the river at this season was swollen with rain, this was the only passage. The country is rocky and mountainous, and though the advanced sentries of both parties were within a few yards of the bridge, it was not expected that either would attempt to annoy the other; so great were the obstacles which the nature of the ground presented. The French, however, collected a brigade in St. Felices, and after night had closed marched 600 men toward the bridge. About midnight they were all assembled there, and made the advanced sentries prisoners; a picquet of eighty men, posted behind the rocks, immediately fired upon them and retreated in excellent order; they pushed on up the mountain, hoping to surprise the remainder of the men, but were presently repulsed. The loss was trifling on either side. Marshal Ney, however, ventured to assert, that the English had been routed at the point of the bayonet, and that their transports were ready at Porto and Lisbon.

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1810.
March.

The French had learnt at Vimeiro, and Coruña, and Talavera, to respect British valour, but they had not yet been taught to respect English policy; and they fully expected that if they brought a superior force against him, Lord Wellington would fly through Portugal, and seek shelter in his ships. Preparations, therefore, were made for this third invasion, with an army far exceeding in number those which Junot and Soult had commanded, even if they had been united, and under Massena, a general of higher rank than either. No general in the French service had enjoyed so high a reputation since Hoche, and Pichegru, and Moreau had disappeared. Buonaparte, in his first campaigns, called him, in his own inflated style, the favourite Child of Victory; and after the late Austrian war, created him Prince of Essling, because his skill and exertions had contributed mainly to the escape of the French from utter destruction at the battle of Aspern. He was appointed commander-in-

*Massena
appointed
to the army
of Portugal.*

CHAP. chief of the provinces of the north of Spain, including the king-
 XXXI. doms of Old Castille, Leon, and Asturias; the provinces of St.
 1810. Andero, Soria, Valladolid and Palencia, Toro, Zamora, Sala-
April. manca and Avila; the army under him was named the army of
 Portugal; and, as Soult had done before him, it is believed
 that he went to make the conquest of Portugal, expecting to be
 rewarded with its crown for his success.

*Ciudad
 Rodrigo.*

In the later wars between Spain and Portugal, the three cities
 where the Spaniards used to collect their armies before they
 invaded the enemy's country were Tuy, Ciudad Rodrigo, and
 Badajoz. Of these fortresses, Tuy, like Valença on the opposite
 frontier, is now of little strength or importance, Badajoz a strong
 place, Ciudad Rodrigo hardly to be ranked in the third order of
 fortresses. It was built some centuries ago, when the site was
 sufficiently convenient for a fortified town; but the situation is
 bad; the works were old and imperfect, and it had other local
 disadvantages. It is commanded from many points; and one
 height, within 500 toises of the city, exceeds by about fifty yards
 the highest of its buildings. There were no bomb-proofs; and
 the suburbs, in which there were four convents, and the number
 of gardens without the walls, materially assisted the operations of
 a besieging army. The population of the city had been estimated
 at about 10,000; but it appears not much to have exceeded half
 that number. The garrison amounted to 4950, including 600
 townsmen; the greater part of the others being volunteers, or
 men newly raised. Camp Marshal D. Andres Perez de Herrasti
 was governor, an old man, who had been the friend and comrade
 of Mariano Alvarez.

*The French
 besiege it.*

On the 25th of April 6000 French appeared before the
 place, and encamped in the *Termino* of Pedro Toro, a league to
 the eastward. On the 30th, the second division, consisting of
 from 4000 to 5000, arrived and encamped in the *Termino* of

Valde Carros, a league to the north. Five days afterwards, another encampment was formed between the two. On May 15th, another division, of about 7000 men, encamped to the westward, upon Monte de Ibanrey. So large a force was necessary, because the English were near at hand. By the 4th of June the city was completely invested. This was not effected without repeated skirmishes, in which the enemy suffered considerable loss. In these affairs, D. Antonio Camargo, commandant of the volunteers of Avila, greatly distinguished himself; but the individual who, above all others, annoyed the enemy by his incessant enterprise, was D. Julian Sanchez, the son of a farmer, near the banks of the Guebra. Till the invasion of his country, he had cultivated his father's lands; but when his father, mother, and sister, had been murdered by the French, he made a vow of vengeance, and, at the head of one of those bands which the Spaniards call *guerrillas*, well performed it. On one occasion he surprised, in his father's house, a French colonel, infamous for his atrocities, and put him to death, first telling him who it was that inflicted his merited punishment in this world, and sent him to render account for his crimes in the next.

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May.

D. Julian
Sanchez.

This enterprising leader made repeated assaults upon the enemy, not hesitating, at the head of sixty, eighty, or an hundred of his lancers, to attack three or four times his own number. Camargo, and D. Jose Puente, commandant of the cavalry regiment of Ciudad Rodrigo, co-operated ably with him, and the French suffered daily and hourly losses from their indefatigable activity. They suffered also greatly from the artillery of the town, which was excellently served. Ney carried on his operations in a manner which the Spaniards thought prodigal of the lives of his men, beginning his approaches where, in their judgment, a general more sparing of his army would have terminated

Marshal
Ney summons the
town.

CHAP. them. To protect these works, he ordered a great number of
 XXXI. holes to be dug, where he posted sharpshooters, by whom the
 1810. garrison were greatly annoyed. On the 24th of June, Massena
June. arrived and took the command, and at three on the following
 morning the batteries opened, and a constant fire from six-and-
 forty pieces of heavy artillery was kept up day and night till the
 evening of the 28th, when, having made a breach of about five-
 and-twenty yards in length, Ney required the governor to sur-
 render, "sending him," he said, "this last summons by order
 of the Prince of Essling, commander-in-chief of the army of
 Portugal, then present, whose honour and humanity were well
 known, but who, if the defence were uselessly prolonged, would
 be compelled to treat him with all the rigour authorized by the
 laws of war. If he had any hope of being succoured by the
 English, he was doubtless by that time undeceived; for if such
 had been their intention, they would not have waited till the
 city was reduced to its present deplorable state. He had, there-
 fore, to choose between an honourable capitulation, and the
 terrible vengeance of a victorious army; and a positive answer
 was requested." Herrasti replied, "that after forty-nine years'
 service, he could not but know the laws of war and his military
 duties; the fortress was not in a state to capitulate; and when-
 ever circumstances made it his duty, he would then apply for
 terms, after securing his honour, which was dearer to him than
 life."

*Situation of
 Lord Wel-
 lington.*

How galling it must have been for Lord Wellington to witness
 the progress of the siege, knowing his inability to relieve the
 town, may well be conceived. His outposts were near enough
 to hear even the musketry; but with so large a proportion of his
 troops half-disciplined and untried, he could not act upon the
 offensive against an enemy greatly superior in numbers, without
 incurring the most imminent danger. The only possible plan

by which Portugal could be saved he had laid down for himself, and from that plan no circumstances, however painful to his own feelings, or however derogatory in appearance to his reputation, could induce him to swerve. He was in communication with Romana at Badajoz ; but in the state of the Spanish armies, any plan of co-operation for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo was impossible. It was, however, of great importance that the place should be resolutely defended to the last extremity, and in this hope Romana and the English general were not disappointed. The minds of the people had been prepared for this extremity ; they had their patriotic writers and their poets ; the exploits of Julian Sanchez excited the emulation of the youth, and the conduct of the old governor gave confidence to all. The examples of Zaragoza, and Gerona, and Hostalrich, and Astorga, animated the women and children, as well as those who bore arms ; for in a cause like theirs they had seen their countrymen acquire a glory when unsuccessful, which could not have been greater had they been victorious. The women and children, when they saw their houses burning, gave way neither to fear nor lamentation, but exerted themselves to quench the flames, and carried refreshment and ammunition to the troops amid the hottest fire. There were two blind beggars in the city : no one supposed that these unfortunate men could render any service during the siege, but zeal taught them how to be serviceable ; they carried water to the walls by day, and ammunition by night, with such unwearied activity, that it was the intention of the governor and the Junta, if the town had been saved, to have rewarded them with pensions for life.

It was of great consequence to the Spaniards to keep possession of those buildings without the walls, which would otherwise afford protection to the besiegers, but which also afforded such means for annoying them while they could be defended, that it had not

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June.

*Spirit of the
inhabitants.*

*The nun-
nery of S.
Cruz at-
tacked.*

CHAP. been thought advisable to demolish them before the siege. The
 XXXI. nunnery of Santa Cruz was the most important of these buildings.
 1810. D. Ramon Castellanos was posted there with a company of sixty
July. men, when three hundred of the enemy's grenadiers, with a party
 of sappers, assailed it in the night, half the party attacking it
 in the rear, the other in the front. They blew up the first and
 second gates; hand grenades were thrown on both sides; the
 Spaniards, having the advantage of the building, kept up a most
 destructive discharge of musketry; the commander of the one
 party was killed, the captain of engineers, who commanded the
 other, wounded, but he did not retire till he had set fire to the
 convent. Seeing the flames, the governor made signal for Cas-
 tellanos to abandon the post, who accordingly let down his men
 from a window into one of the inner courts of the convent, and
 descending himself the last, they forced their way with the
 bayonet. It was a little after midnight when they reached the
 gate of La Colada; but seeing, while they took food and rested
 after the action, that the enemy had extinguished the flames,
 Castellanos went to the governor, and represented to him that
 his honour was concerned in recovering the post. He led his
 men at three in the morning, after only two hours' respite, to
 the assault, and surprising the French, drove them from their
 dearly purchased conquest, where they left 158 dead, and 45
 wounded behind them, the remainder of the wounded having
 been removed during the short time that they retained possession.

*Convent of
 St. Domingo
 recovered.*

July 2.

They were driven from the convent of St. Domingo in a
 manner not less worthy of remembrance. After they had won
 the building, Herrasti was very desirous of recovering it, and
 yet hesitated at giving orders for the attempt, knowing the ex-
 hausted state of the garrison, and how ill any loss of men could
 be afforded. A serjeant, by name Manuel Martin, happened to
 hear what was the state of the governor's feelings upon this sub-

ject. This man, who was a native of Zamora, had made himself well known to the French: they called him *agua y vino*, water and wine, the words which he always used when engaged in action with them; wine being his signal for attack, and water that for retreat. He had distinguished himself greatly during the siege, and had at this time a wound in his arm, which however did not prevent him from going to the governor, and soliciting permission to make an attack upon the enemy in this convent, saying, that if he could not drive them out, at least he could annoy them there. Accordingly, choosing out five-and-twenty comrades, he attacked the convent with such well-directed vigour, that the enemy, though greatly superior in numbers, were terrified and took to flight, many of them leaving their knapsacks and muskets behind them. This was so signal an exploit, that Manuel Martin was deservedly promoted for it, and a badge of distinction was given to each of the soldiers.

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But against such a force as surrounded them, all that the Spaniards could do was to hold out to the uttermost, and sell the fortress as dearly as possible. Massena boasted of having 100,000 men in the field; he had 66,000 infantry and 6000 horse, of whom as many as could be advantageously employed carried on the siege, while the others kept the British army in check, Lord Wellington having only 51,000 under his command, including 3000 cavalry, and half this force composed of Portuguese, who were as yet untried, and consequently in whom little reliance could then be placed. They were, however, brigaded with the British in the proportion of one battalion to two, and were every day acquiring confidence and character. The siege was less murderous than that of Zaragoza, because the city was much smaller and less populous, and, having the advantage of regular works, did not require the same kind of defence. When Herrasti and the Junta saw that it was not possible to hold out

Julian Sanchez effects his escape from the city

CHAP. much longer, they ordered Julian Sanchez and his lancers to
 XXXI. make their escape while it was yet practicable, reminding San-
 1810. chez how important it was that his services should still be con-
 July. tinued, and telling him he would be of more assistance to Ciudad
 Rodrigo in the field than he could now be within the walls. A
 little before midnight Sanchez collected his troops in the plaza;
 the two of his company who were married men took their wives
 behind them: they sallied out, and their leader, in the spirit of
 Scanderbeg, instead of contenting himself with merely effecting
 his own retreat, charged a post of cavalry, routed them, and
 carried away eight prisoners with their horses. The two women
 were armed with pistols, and one of them, by name Marta Fraile,
 saved her husband, by shooting a dragoon who was about to
 attack him on one side.

*State of the
 British
 army.*

The British army meantime, though it could render no as-
 sistance, was far from being idly or ill employed. There had
 been a prevailing feeling of despondency before the siege began,
 and an expectation that the town would surrender as soon as the
 enemy should have opened their fire. The progress of the siege
 produced more respect for the Spaniards, and the active service
 in which the men soon found themselves engaged produced cheer-
 fulness and hope. The picquets occupied the line of the Azava
 from Carpio on the right to its junction with the Agueda; the
 enemy had 8000 men on the left bank of the Agueda, behind
 that river and the Azava, which was fordable in many places.
 The head-quarters of the light division, under Major-General
 Craufurd, were at Gallegos, a short league distant, in an open
 country; the greatest alertness, therefore, was necessary, and
 the men slept at their horses' heads, the horses bridled and
 the reins in hand. The Germans were selected for the out-
 post duty, being at that time the only troops in the army who
 were acquainted with it: the 16th light dragoons requested to be

intermixed with them on duty, men and officers; a compliment which gratified the brave men to whom it was paid, and the greatest harmony was always preserved. The picquets were brought to the greatest perfection, and the division soon attained that alertness which could only be learnt in such service. The Portugueze behaved well on the first opportunity which was afforded, and obtained the good opinion of their allies; so that every thing went on satisfactorily in the allied army, except that in a trifling and ill-executed affair Colonel Talbot fell, a gallant officer, who had distinguished himself at Talavera, and was deservedly and greatly lamented.

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The French general, to whom time was of more consequence than any cost of lives, pressed the siege with the utmost vigour, but with heavy loss, owing to the repeated sallies of the garrison, and the excellent manner in which the artillery of the Spaniards was served. In hope of forcing the governor to surrender by the cries of the inhabitants, he bombarded the town, and almost destroyed it; but the people were not to be shaken in their purpose, the names of Numantia and Zaragoza were in every mouth, and they were resolved in their turn to transmit a memorable example to posterity. Meantime the regular advances of the besiegers were carried on without intermission, and by the 2d of July a practicable breach had been opened in the Baluarte del Rey. The Spaniards made every exertion to defend it with sacks of earth, estacades, and whatever other obstacles they could oppose to the enemy; but the French did not yet venture an assault; they had so severely experienced the valour of their opponents, that they had determined not to storm the town till the works should be reduced to such a state, that they might avail themselves of the whole advantage of their numbers. They made three mines, one under the counterscarp, the other two under the curtain of the wall and part of the Calle del Seminario, or

A practicable breach made.

CHAP. College-street, near the Cathedral. The besieged were aware
 XXXI. of their progress, but all efforts at impeding it were useless, and
 1810. at three in the morning of the 10th, the counterscarp was blown
 July. up, forming not only an open breach, but such a way to it that
 carts might ascend from the glacis.

Immediately afterwards the French renewed the fire from all their batteries, and kept it up without intermission for twelve hours. During this time the cry of the soldiers and the inhabitants, women and boys, as well as their husbands and fathers, was, that they would beat off the enemy or die; but the officers and the Junta were well aware, that any farther resistance would only afford the French a pretext for carrying their threats into execution, and putting all to the sword. Thirty thousand men were ready to storm the city that evening. It was not without much difficulty that the people could be induced to hear of a council of war, nor would they have suffered one to be held, had they not seen such undoubted proofs of the patriotism and courage of those who now told them that a surrender was become inevitable. There were some in the council who proposed to follow the example of Julian Estrada at Hostalrich, and force their way with the bayonet through their enemies; but here, as at Astorga, it was urged that they were in different circumstances, and had therefore different duties; their business now was to preserve 5000 inhabitants, who would else be exposed to the unrestrained vengeance and brutality of the enemy. Finally, it was resolved to capitulate, but not till the latest moment, when there was no longer the slightest hope or possibility of relief.

*The town
 capitulates.
 July 10.*

Massena's orders to Ney were to assault the town that evening; the French advanced for this purpose, and were at the foot of the breach, in the act of mounting, when the white flag was hoisted: the officer who planted it in the breach descended with the terms of capitulation, and presented them to Ney, who

sternly told him it was now too late for any thing. The Spaniard, however, had recourse to Massena, who was at that time supposed to be more humane than Ney. The first article was, that the garrison should march out with the honours of war; the rest were in like manner such as are usual in the like circumstances. Massena having cast his eye over them, said, "Tell your governor, this is no time to ratify the terms in writing; but I grant all which he requires, and am going to give orders accordingly." He then sent his adjutant-general to bid Ney suspend the assault. Loison immediately marched through the breach, and took possession of the town; and General Simon, notwithstanding Massena's pledged word, made the garrison deposit their arms in the arsenal.

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The other terms were at the moment fulfilled; and when Herrasti, the next day, requested that the capitulation might be signed, in order that he might transmit it to his own government, Massena replied, that as he saw the articles observed, he neither could nor ought to require more. The people had escaped the horrors of an assault; but in other respects they soon found they were at the mercy of a conqueror who acknowledged no other law than his own pleasure. Herrasti had stipulated for the liberty of the civil officers; they, however, were declared prisoners of war. The members of the Junta were thrown into the vilest dungeon of the public gaol, from whence, after having endured for eight-and-forty hours every kind of insult and ill treatment, they were marched on foot to Salamanca, in company with the governor, who alone was permitted to retain his horse. The clergy were arrested and shut up for two days in the church of St. Juan; the old and infirm were then suffered to go to their houses, but forbidden the exercise of their functions; the lay brethren were ordered to serve in the hospitals, and all the others sent prisoners to Salamanca. The next measures were, to impose a

*Conduct of
the French.*

CHAP. contribution of 1,800,000 reales, and to set from six to eight hun-
 XXXI. dred men at work to destroy the batteries, fill up the trenches,
 1810. and repair the works, compelling them to labour like slaves,
 July. giving them no provisions, and allowing them little rest.

The account which the French published of their conquest was, according to their system, full of falsehoods. They asserted that the garrison had surrendered at discretion, which could only be contradicted, not disproved, because Massena had broken his word. This falsehood is worthy of remark, because it shows so strikingly the characteristic baseness of Buonaparte's generals. Ciudad Rodrigo was evidently at their mercy ; a generous enemy would have rejoiced to show his sense of the merits of those who had opposed him, and would have known that in refusing them the honours of war, he deprived them only of a barren form ; for the merit of their gallant and heroic defence it was not in his power to efface. Massena, not satisfied with thus injuring Herrasti's honour, cast upon him a fouler aspersion, making him say, that he and the garrison would have surrendered sooner, if they had not been intimidated by the inhabitants. In reality, such had been the noble spirit of the soldiers, that it was only by the entreaties, as well as the arguments of the superior Junta of Castille, whose residence was in that city, that they were prevailed upon to give up their intention of attempting to cut their way through the besiegers. The French general did not forget to insult the English, and endeavour by his falsehoods to exasperate the Spaniards against them. " Ciudad Rodrigo," he said, " fell in their presence ; they promised to succour it ; made the inhabitants prolong their defence by this deceitful hope ; and suffered the place to fall without making the slightest effort for its relief. Thus they had excited against them the universal indignation of the garrison and the people, who united in exclaiming against their perfidy."

This justice, however, Massena did to Ciudad Rodrigo, that he admitted the defence had been most obstinate. It was impossible, he said, to form an idea of the state to which it was reduced. Every thing had been battered down; not a single house remained uninjured. The killed he estimated at more than 2000. The Spaniards stated it at only sixty-three of the inhabitants, and 237 of the garrison. Seven thousand soldiers, he said, laid down their arms: . . . the number at the commencement of the siege was 4950. Six hundred made their escape on the night of the capitulation, and more than 1500 before they reached Salamanca. Above two-and-forty thousand shells were thrown into the city, and nearly five-and-twenty thousand from it. The quantity of powder consumed by the garrison during the last sixteen days was 893 quintales, . . . the quintal being 132 lbs. The French gave no statement of their own loss; it was probably very considerable; the Spaniards estimated it at 3400. The capture, however, occasioned the greatest exultation in Paris, and the *Moniteur* mingled with its own insults the echoes of our factious journalists. "The good sense of the English people," it said, "enabling them to foresee the dishonour and destruction of their army in Portugal, they are convinced that the most fortunate event which could befall it would be a catastrophe like that of Moore's. They are too much accustomed to calculate chances and events not to know, that alone against France they can, in such a contest, meet nothing but disaster, and obtain nothing but disgrace." "Men of sound judgement, like Grenville or Grey, are numerous in England," said the *Moniteur*, "but they are at present without any influence there." Then, returning to its natural tone of insult, it ridiculed the strength of Lord Wellington's army, amounting to the dreadful number of 24,000 English. "The cries of the inhabitants of Ciudad Rodrigo," it said, "were heard in his camp, which was only six

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upon the
campaign.*

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leagues distant: but all ears were shut against them; the English made no attempt to succour that city: . . . they were the laughing-stock of Europe; every coffee-house waiter knew their weakness on land, as well as their influence at sea. Ciudad Rodrigo was one of the last bulwarks of the insurrection; its capture made the catastrophe more imminent for England, who would now find it necessary to call to the helm more prudent men, better acquainted with the nature of the resources and of the strength of their country, and therefore more moderate."

In England, too, we were told, that if Ciudad Rodrigo were taken, the efforts of the English might be considered to be at an end; the French would then be able to advance without fear of a check; the harvest also being now begun, whatever grain there was in the country they would be able to secure for themselves, and so form magazines, the want of which had hitherto chiefly retarded their advance. At one time these politicians cried out, "that Lord Wellington could not permit the enemy quietly to prosecute the siege of so important a fortress." At another, "they would not suppose him capable of fighting a useless battle: for they trusted he was not so prodigal of the blood of his followers. They trusted that his operations would be justified by the event." Then again "they were not competent to speak from their own knowledge, yet certainly it did appear a doubtful policy to be patiently waiting till Massena had time to concentrate his troops, and make all his arrangements for an attack on the British position." "The plan of overwhelming Lord Wellington, by bringing an immense superiority to bear upon him, was one which obviously presented itself; there seemed no insurmountable difficulty in the execution; obstacles there might be, from want of provisions and other circumstances, but the skill and perseverance of the French in combating them forbade us to place much reliance upon such grounds." In this

manner, always presaging evil, and consistent in nothing but despondency, sometimes borrowing the tone of the *Moniteur*, and sometimes setting it, did these journalists of a disappointed party labour to deaden the hearts and hopes of their countrymen; while their more daring, but hardly more mischievous, coadjutors addressed their weekly invectives to the readers and auditors in pot-houses and tap-rooms, abusing their ignorance, appealing to, and inflaming their worst passions, and crying out against the measures of their own government, while upon the crimes of Buonaparte they observed a silence which sufficiently indicated their sympathy with his system, their wishes for the extension of his tyranny, and their hopes of his eventual success.

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The fall of Ciudad Rodrigo enabled Massena to detach a force for the relief of Astorga, where General Mahy, who commanded in Galicia, was blockading the French garrison. This object was easily effected. General Taboada at this time occupied Puebla de Sanabria, where he was exerting himself to organize a body of troops for the field: General Echavarria was engaged in like manner at Alcañizas. In such feeble, uncombined efforts the spirit of the country was spent, and its resources frittered away; for as soon as men enough were brought together to attract the enemy's attention, they were either dispersed or destroyed. This was the fate of Echavarria's corps; it was surprised by a French detachment under General La Croix, and nearly annihilated. The alarm spread to Silveira's head-quarters at Braganza, and Colonel Wilson (his second in command) hastened with the advanced guard to Echavarria's support; but he arrived only to find the ground covered with dead and wounded Spaniards, the enemy having retired to Carvales, after completely accomplishing the purpose of their expedition. Massena boasted soon afterwards of a like success at Sanabria; but the results

*La Puebla
de Sanabria
occupied by
the French.*

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were very different. The French magnified the importance of this post, saying that it commanded the entrance into Portugal, and shut up the communication with Galicia. They said also, that Lord Wellington had enjoined the Spanish governor to make an obstinate defence; but that the governor reproached him in reply for having deceived the commandant of Ciudad Rodrigo, and broken his word with him; told him it was evident he intended to do nothing for Spain, but only, for the sake of fomenting divisions, held out hopes of assistance which were never realized; yet nevertheless offered to shut himself up in the fortress, and bury himself in its ruins, if the English general would send him one Englishman for two Spaniards, to assist in its defence. The answer of Lord Wellington, the French papers said, might easily be conceived; and the Spanish general therefore abandoned the town, where General Serras found twenty pieces of artillery, and provisions for 3000 men for six months. After this the French made no farther mention of the Puebla de Sanabria.

*The Portu-
gueze re-
take it.*

D. Francisco Taboada Gil, the officer who was thus falsely represented as insulting the English general, had communicated not with him but with the Portugueze commander, Silveira, at Braganza, with whom it was agreed that he should evacuate the place if it were attacked by a superior force. Taboada accordingly fell back upon the Portillas de Galicia; Silveira, having ascertained that Serras had returned with the greater part of his troops to Mombuey, concerted measures with the Spanish general for surprising the garrison which the French had left in Sanabria, and on the fourth day after they had taken possession of their boasted conquest, the enemy found themselves invested in the fort. They were summoned; but the commander replied, that he had men and ammunition to defend himself with, and that he expected speedily to be succoured by Marshal Mas-

July 29.

Aug. 3.

sena. On the following morning a detachment of about seventy French cavalry came on to attack the advanced guard of the Portugueze, under Captain Francisco Texeira Lobo, whose force was about equal ; but while he charged them in front, another small party of Portugueze, by his instructions, wheeled round and attacked them in the rear: they were instantly broken, and twenty-eight were left upon the field, thirty prisoners, and forty horses taken. The remainder of that day was spent in vain endeavours to force an entrance into the fort: the assailants burnt the gates, but the enemy blocked them up effectually with stones; the Portugueze and Spaniards then got possession of a house adjoining, from whence they attempted to make a way through, but the enemy soon battered it down. On the morrow, one mortar and one three-pounder were planted against them; the first became useless after a few discharges, and Silveira, the next morning, sent for a six-pounder from Braganza. He was now apprized that Serras was advancing in force to relieve the garrison. Silveira left the Spaniards to maintain the blockade, and drew up in order of battle upon the river Tera; but Serras, having reconnoitred his force, thought proper to retire upon Mombuey. The six-pounder, from Braganza, was an iron gun, in such a state, that when it arrived it was of no avail; and a twelve-pounder, which on the 8th was brought from the same place, proved in the same condition: this was a serious disappointment, for Silveira was now apprized that Serras was collecting reinforcements. Six hundred horse had entered Zamora, on their way to him, and two battalions of Italian troops were joining him from Benevente, Leon, and Astorga. Unable to batter the place, because of the wretched state of his artillery, which had been long left to rust in a dilapidated fortress, he tried the effect of mining; here experience and skill were wanting, and only the face of the curtain was thrown down. The garrison,

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CHAP. however, who were Swiss, dreaded that a second attempt might
XXXI. prove more successful; and their commandant, pleading that
1810. he and his men were not French, proposed and obtained good
August. terms, delivering up the place on condition that they should
be allowed to embark from Coruña, and return to their own
country, on their parole, not to bear arms against the allied
powers. The artillery of the place, and the stores, were re-
stored to the Spaniards; but Silveira retained for the Portuguese
an eagle, the first which they had taken from their enemy. Sixty
of the Swiss entered into the service of the allies.

Serras was in sight of Silveira's advanced posts when this
capitulation was concluded; he had with him from 4000 to 5000
foot, and about 800 cavalry. The allied Portuguese and Span-
iards were inferior in number, and still more in discipline, and
with this unequal force pressing hard upon them they broke up
from Sanabria, at a time when the prisoners were come three
hours march on the way to Coruña. Colonel Wilson, who had
been ordered on an important duty to head-quarters, returned
in time to assume the command of the rear-guard, and with it
cover their retrograde movement. He checked the French in a
sharp affair of cavalry, after which he took the open road to
Braganza, Silveira retreating with the foot upon the heights of
Calabor, where the enemy, if they should continue the pursuit,
could derive no advantage from their horse. But having arrived
too late for saving the garrison, they advanced no farther than
Pedralva, and from thence returned to Sanabria, then to Mom-
buey. This was the termination of General Serras's success at
the Puebla de Sanabria; the whole of the garrison which he
left there were taken prisoners, and the eagle which was taken
with them was deposited with proper triumph in the cathedral
at Lisbon, as the first trophy of the regenerated Portuguese.]

CHAPTER XXXII.

CAPTURE OF ALMEIDA. CONDUCT OF THE PORTUGUEZE GOVERNMENT. BATTLE OF BUSACO. RETREAT OF THE BRITISH AND PORTUGUEZE TO THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS. THE KING'S ILLNESS.

FROM Ciudad Rodrigo Massena addressed a proclamation 1810.
to the Portuguese. “Inhabitants of Portugal,” he said, “the ^{July.}
Emperor of the French has put under my orders an army of ^{Massena's}
110,000 men, to take possession of this kingdom, and to expel ^{proclama-}
the English, your pretended friends. Against you he has no ^{tion to the}
enmity: on the contrary, it is his highest wish to promote your ^{Portuguese.}
happiness, and the first step for securing it is to dismiss from the
country those locusts who consume your property, blast your
harvests, and palsy your efforts. In opposing the Emperor, you
oppose your true friend; a friend who has it in his power to
render you the happiest people in the world. Were it not for
the insidious counsels of England, you might now have enjoyed
peace and tranquillity, and have been put in possession of that
happiness. You have blindly rejected offers calculated only to
promote your benefit, and have accepted proposals which will
long be the curse of Portugal. His majesty has commissioned
me to conjure you that you would awake to your true interests;
that you would awake to those prospects which, with your con-
sent, may be quickly realized; awake so as to distinguish between
friends and enemies. The King of England is actuated by selfish

CHAP. and narrow purposes ; the Emperor of the French is governed
 XXXII. by principles of universal philanthropy. The English have put
 1810. arms into your hands, arms which you know not how to use : I
July. will instruct you. They are to be the instruments of annihilation
 to your foes : . . and who those foes are I have already shown.
 Use them as you ought, and they will become your salvation !
 Use them as you ought not, and they will prove your destruction !
 Resistance is vain. Can the feeble army of the British general
 expect to oppose the victorious legions of the Emperor ? Already
 a force is collected, sufficient to overwhelm your country. Snatch
 the moment that mercy and generosity offer ! As friends you
 may respect us, and be respected in return ; as foes you must
 dread us, and in the conflict must be subdued. The choice is
 your own, either to meet the horrors of a bloody war, and see your
 country desolated, your villages in flames, your cities plundered ;
 or to accept an honourable and happy peace, which will obtain
 for you every blessing that by resistance you would resign for
 ever."

*The French
 invest Al-
 meida.*

On the same day that Ciudad Rodrigo surrendered, the
 enemy's cavalry appeared on the plains of Almeida. Lord Wel-
 lington's head-quarters at this time were at Alverca : his position
 was a defensive line, about thirty miles in extent, along the
 frontier mountains of Beira ; but as the line formed a segment
 of a circle, the points were not distant from each other in pro-
 portion to its length. The infantry extended from Celorico to
 Guarda on the one side, and to Fort Conception, one of the out-
 works of Almeida, on the other. The cavalry were in advance
 near Fort Conception, and at Sabugal, and on the Coa. The
 enemy's superiority in horse was very great, but the nature of
 the ground deprived them of the advantage which this must
 otherwise have given them. They now proceeded to invest
 Almeida. The operations of the siege were conducted by the

second corps, under Marshal Ney. Junot, with the 8th, had his head-quarters at S. Felices, and his cavalry at Villar de Porco, Fuente Guinaldo, and Fuentes d'Onoro, ground which had not then been rendered memorable in military history. While this portion of the army covered the siege, Serras with a division of 7000 men at Benevente threatened Tras os Montes, and Bonnet with 8000 at Astorga was ready to enter Galicia and the province of Entre Douro e Minho.

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1810.
July.

Dumouriez, forgetting Elvas at the time, has called Almeida *Almeida* the strongest place in Portugal. It is perhaps more important from its situation, but very far inferior to it in strength. This town was founded by the Moors, and is said to have been one of those which Ferrando the Great won from them while the Cid served under him, in his first wars. When the tide of success was for a while turned by the entrance of the Almoravides into Spain, Talmayda, as it was then called, fell again into the hands of the misbelievers, from whom it was finally reconquered, in 1190, by King Sancho I. of Portugal. Payo Guterres, distinguishing himself in the conquest, obtained from it the appellation of *O Almeydam*, the Almeydan, and transmitted to his descendants the surname of Almeyda, conspicuous in Portuguese and Indian history, but disgraced at this time by the representative of the family, who was then engaged in Massena's army as a traitor. King Diniz, the ruins of whose magnificent works are to be seen in every part of Portugal, rebuilt the city, and is supposed to have removed it from a valley, a little way north of its present site. The castle was built by him, and repaired by King Emanuel. In the later wars between Spain and Portugal, Almeida has always been considered a place of great importance, being the bulwark of the latter country on its most accessible side; but, like other things of more essential consequence to the strength of a kingdom, it had long been neglected. In 1809

CHAP. there were not a dozen gun-carriages fit for service, nor any
 XXXII. wood in store for the construction of others; the embrasures were
 1810. falling to decay, and the palisades of the covert-way had been
August. mostly broken, or carried away for fire-wood. The works were
 originally ill constructed, and the place had the great disadvantage of being commanded on one side by a hill. Its population in 1747 was 2463; and Almeida is not one of the few places in Portugal which have been progressive since that time.

*Fort Con-
 ception
 abandoned.*

The same causes which rendered it impossible for Lord Wellington to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo, made it necessary for him to leave Almeida to its own means of defence; but the work had been repaired, the garrison was strong, and Brigadier Cox, an English officer in the Portuguese service, was appointed to the command. With the example of Ciudad Rodrigo before it, there was no reason to doubt that Almeida would make a vigorous resistance, and probably hold out so long as materially to derange the plans of the enemy. Fort Conception was abandoned and blown up at the enemy's approach. General Craufurd, however, continued to occupy a position near Almeida with 3200 British and 1100 Portuguese troops, eight squadrons of cavalry included. The chain of his cavalry outposts formed a semicircle in front of the town, their right flank resting on the Coa, near As Naves, about three miles above this fortress, and their left, in like manner, resting upon the same river, about three miles below it, near Cinco Villas. The centre was covered by a small stream, and on the right and centre, where it was expected that the enemy would advance, the cavalry posts were supported by piquets of infantry. There was but one road by which the artillery and cavalry could retreat, that leading from Almeida to the bridge, which is about a mile west of the town. The nature of the ground made it difficult for the enemy to approach this road on the left of the allies, and on the south the infantry were placed

to cover it, having their right flank resting on the Coa above the bridge, their front covered by a deep rocky ravine, and their left in some enclosures near a * windmill, on the plain, about 800 yards south of the town.

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On the morning of July 24th, the centre of the British line of piquets was attacked; they were supported by the 14th light dragoons and two guns, but were withdrawn when a considerable column of the enemy appeared with artillery, and began to form on the other side of the rivulet. The force which Marshal Ney, who directed these movements, brought into the field, consisted of 20,000 foot and between 3000 and 4000 horse, being in fact his whole corps. Fifteen squadrons of cavalry crossed the rivulet as soon as the piquets retired, and formed with artillery in front, and about 7000 infantry on their right; other troops meantime were advancing upon the right of the British position, the side on which they might best expect to cut off the retreat of the allies to the bridge. General Craufurd now perceived that it was impossible for him to prevent the investment of Almeida, and that he was on the wrong side of the Coa. The artillery and cavalry were therefore ordered to retreat along the only road which was practicable for them; the infantry from the left to move off in *echelon*; the right it was necessary to hold till the last, to prevent the enemy from approaching the bridge by a road coming from Junca, which runs in the bottom of the valley by the river side.

*Affair on
the Coa.*

On the left, the men had to retreat through thick vineyards, intersected with deep trenches, and with walls six or seven feet high; they could not take advantage of this ground, for the

* Upon this windmill the governor intended to mount a gun, and the gun was lying in it, but not as yet mounted, and consequently useless; another dismounted gun was lying near the mill. These guns of course could be of no use in the action which ensued, but they figured in Marshal Massena's account of it.

CHAP. enemy were in such force, that there was imminent danger of
XXXII. being overpowered, and cut off before they could reach the
1810. bridge. One of these walls General Craufurd had considered as
a complete defence against cavalry; it enclosed a vineyard, in
which some companies had been stationed, but there had been
a heavy rain during the whole of the preceding night, and the
troops had pulled down this wall in many places to make use of the
stones for forming a shelter; through these openings the enemy's
horse entered, and here they made most of the prisoners who
were taken in the action. To retire in order over such ground
was impossible, but the retreat was made with characteristic
coolness. On the other side the bridge, the ground was equally
unfavourable for re-forming; the 43d and part of the 95th regi-
ments were ordered to form in front of the bridge, and defend it
as long as they could, while the rest of the troops should pass
over and take a new position. They obeyed these orders so
literally, that they defended it all day; three times the enemy
attempted to force the passage, and each time they were re-
pulsed at the point of the bayonet; at length, when night closed,
and every thing had passed over, and the enemy had ceased to
assail them, these brave men retreated from the post where so
many of their comrades had fallen: the heaviest loss necessarily
fell upon these gallant regiments; the total, in killed, wounded,
and prisoners, amounted to 330*. Colonel Hall of the 43d, who

* Massena's official statement of this action was a masterpiece of impudent falsehood. He asserted that General Craufurd's force consisted of 2000 horse and 8000 foot, and that they were all posted under the guns of the fortress; that they gave way before the French, our cavalry not daring to meet them with the sabre, and the infantry pursued at a running step; that we lost sixty officers, of whom twenty-four were buried in the field of battle; 400 killed, 700 wounded, 400 prisoners, one stand of colours, and two pieces of cannon, while the loss of the conquerors did not amount to 300. He took no colours, and the two pieces of cannon

was among the slain, had only joined from England the preceding day. The loss was to be regretted because there was no object to be gained by engaging the French at such disadvantage; but never did men behave more gallantly than those who were engaged that day, British and Portuguese alike. They effected their retreat under the most unfavourable circumstances, without losing a gun, a trophy, or a single article of field equipment; and they inflicted upon the enemy a loss, which, by his own account, was nearly equal to the sum of ours, and which in reality doubled its amount. After this the infantry were withdrawn to the neighbourhood of Celorico, leaving the outpost duty to be performed by cavalry alone.

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1810.

Massena asserted that one of our couriers had been taken with dispatches, which represented that the English had never been engaged in so brisk an affair; that they were in full rout; and that it was impossible to form an idea of their deplorable condition. Of the condition of that army, and the full rout to which he had driven them, it was not long before Massena obtained some correct personal knowledge; but it is probable that some desponding letters had fallen into his hands, and it is likely also that he expected to drive the British army before him full speed to Lisbon. Letters had been written from that army to Porto, in which the writers had delivered it as their opinion that our forces must inevitably retreat, Massena having such an overpowering superiority, that Portugal could not possibly be de-

*Desponding
letters from
the army.*

were the dismounted guns at the windmill. In a subsequent dispatch Massena assured the war-minister that all his troops were burning with impatience to teach the English army what they had already taught Craufurd's division. Our own gazette had already shown the veracity of this boaster's account; but this new insult called forth a counter-statement from General Craufurd, from which this detail has chiefly been drawn, and to the truth of which the whole British army were witnesses.

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1810.

fended against him. These letters excited such alarm among the British merchants in that city, that the vice-consul applied to our admiral at Lisbon, requesting he would take into consideration the necessity of having a sufficient force off the Douro to protect the British subjects, who might be compelled to embark without the least delay. They were in the utmost consternation, he said. Admiral Berkeley thought it proper to send this requisition to Lord Wellington, who in consequence issued general orders upon the subject. "He would not make any inquiry," he said, "to ascertain the authors of these letters, which had excited so much consternation in a place where it was most to be wished that none should exist. He had frequently lamented the ignorance displayed in letters from the army, and the indiscretion with which those letters were published. It was impossible that many officers could possess a sufficient knowledge of facts to be able to form a correct opinion of the probable events of the campaign, yet when their erroneous opinions were published, they could not but produce mischievous effects. He requested, therefore, that the officers, on account of their own reputation, would refrain from giving opinions upon matters, with regard to which they could not possibly possess the necessary knowledge for giving it with correctness; and if they communicated to their correspondents facts relating to the position of the army, its strength, the formation of its magazines, preparations for cutting down or blowing up bridges, &c., they would at least tell their correspondents not to publish these letters in newspapers, unless it was certain that the publication could not prove injurious to the army and to the public service."

Apprehensions expressed in England.

There was cause for this reproof. The effect of such agueish predictions in Portugal could only be to make the Portuguese believe we should forsake them, and thus dispose them for submission to the enemy; while, in England, they assisted the party

of the despondents, whose journalists were labouring to strike their country with a dead palsy. “We had been lulled,” they said, “into the most dangerous confidence. Massena was only waiting for the advance of his flanks, that he might, with his whole combined army, either force our handful of men to a battle, or surround them: all that could be expected was, that the survivors might be enabled to retire to their ships with eclat.” By the next dispatches it appeared, that it was more easy for a journalist to imagine such a manœuvre, than for Massena to execute it; but this had no other effect than to make them change the note of alarm. “If Massena,” they then said, “did not destroy Lord Wellington’s army by fighting, it could only be because he meant to destroy it by not fighting; for Massena was the most consummate captain of all Buonaparte’s generals. And did ministers anticipate with complacency the continuance of our army in Portugal through the winter? The rainy season was approaching; might it not be the deep policy of this arch-statesman and conqueror to keep our army there? He would be content to devote Massena and his troops to destruction, if it would facilitate some ulterior plan; he might mean to ruin us by the expense of our forces there; and what should we say, if it were really a part of his policy to keep them there, while he, having possession of the Dutch, the Danish, and the Swedish fleets and ports, made a descent upon England or Ireland? They trusted ministers were upon their guard, and that they destined their troops at home for a service more imminent than the reinforcement of Lord Wellington.”

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While these writers, in the pure spirit of faction, were thus advising a diversion in favour of the enemy, Ney, who conducted the siege of Almeida, directed Loison to summon the governor. This general, who was peculiarly odious in that country for his cruelty and rapacity, addressed the governor as a Portuguese,

Ney summons the governor of Almeida.

July 24.

CHAP. admonishing him not to hazard the interests of his nation for a
 XXXII. vain point of honour. "None," said he, "knows better than
 1810. you do, that the French come to deliver you from the yoke of
 the English. There is not a Portuguese who is ignorant of the
 little consideration which his country enjoys among that people.
 Have they not given abundant proofs of the little attention which
 they pay to a nation worthy of esteem, and for a long time the
 ally of France? Their occupation of all the civil and military
 posts proves to demonstration, that the intention of the English
 government is to consider Portugal as one of her colonies. The
 conduct which the English have held with regard to the Spaniards,
 whom they promised to defend, but abandoned, should open
 your eyes, and convince you that they will do the same with
 regard to Portugal. Sir Governor, his excellency has charged
 me to offer you the most honourable capitulation, by which you
 may retain the government of your fortress, and your garrison
 be admitted into the number of those Portuguese troops that
 have remained faithful to the interests of their country. In your
 hands, therefore, is placed the fate of Almeida, and of your com-
 panions in arms. If you refuse to accede to this proposal, you
 will become responsible for all the blood shed unavailingly, in a
 cause which is foreign to the Portuguese nation." Brigadier
 Cox happened to be in the covered-way, close to the barrier
 gate, when the flag of truce arrived with this summons. Without
 permitting the French officer to enter, he returned a verbal an-
 swer, that the fortress would be defended to the last extremity.

*Portuguese
 in Massena's
 army.*

The Portuguese troops, of whom Loison spake as being
 engaged in the service of France, were the remainder of those
 whom Junot had hurried away from their own country. The
 men, Buonaparte was too wary to send back; but Massena
 brought with him a few nobles, who, having long preyed upon
 the country which they disgraced, completed their infamy by

betraying it. To these traitors Loison appealed in his summons, saying, they could assure the governor of the honourable manner in which they had been treated. The Marquis of Alorna, D. Pedro de Almeida, was the most conspicuous among them; he and his accomplices used all their influence to persuade their countrymen to submission; but the Portuguese had already experienced the effects of non-resistance, and the inhabitants of Castello Mendo, and a few other villages on the borders of Beira, were the only persons who were unfortunate enough to be deceived. These poor people, instead of abandoning their habitations on the approach of the enemy, in obedience to the orders which had been issued, remained in them, fearing to encounter the evils of wandering in search of shelter, and hoping, that, as they submitted to the enemy without resistance, their property would be safe, their women preserved from violation, and their lives secured. But the French, conscious of the wickedness of the cause in which they were engaged, seemed, like the pirates of the last century, to have considered themselves in a state of reprobation, and to have committed crimes which make humanity shudder, as if for the purpose of manifesting their desperate defiance of God and man. "The inhabitants of these submissive villages suffered all the evils which a cruel enemy could inflict; their property was plundered; their houses burnt; their women atrociously violated; and those, whose age and sex did not provoke the brutal violence of the soldiers, fell victims to the confidence which they placed in promises made only to be broken." In these words the enormities which the French committed were proclaimed by the Portuguese government, and by the British general.

That general addressed a proclamation to the Portuguese upon the occasion, telling them they now saw what they had to expect from the French. They now saw that no means remained

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.

*The Portuguese ordered to retire before the enemy.
Aug. 4.*

CHAP. for avoiding the evils with which they were threatened, but a
 XXXII. determined and vigorous resistance, and a firm resolution to
 1810. obstruct as much as possible the advance of the enemy, by re-
 moving out of his reach all such things as might contribute to
 his subsistence, or facilitate his progress. “The army under
 my command,” said he, “will protect as large a portion of the
 country as is possible; but it is obvious that the people alone
 can deliver themselves by a vigorous resistance, and preserve
 their goods by removing them out of the reach of the enemy.
 The duties, therefore, that bind me to his Royal Highness the
 Prince Regent of Portugal, and to the Portuguese nation, ob-
 lige me to make use of the power and authority with which I am
 furnished, for compelling the careless and indolent to make the
 necessary efforts to preserve themselves from the dangers which
 threaten them, and to save their country. In conformity with
 this, I make known and declare, that all magistrates and persons
 in authority who shall remain in the villages or towns, after
 having received orders from the military officer to remove,
 and all persons, of whatever class they may be, who shall
 maintain the least communication with, or aid and assist in any
 manner the enemy, shall be considered as traitors to the state,
 and tried, and punished as such an enormous crime requires.”
 The manner in which Lord Wellington assumed this power, in
 the name of the Prince Regent of Portugal, and of the Portu-
 guese nation, was as wise as the assumption itself was necessary
 in such circumstances. The Portuguese people also were fully
 sensible that their duty and their interest were the same, and
 never did any people act with more determined zeal in defence
 of their country.

*Siege of
 Almeida.*

Massena opened his trenches on the night of August 15.
 While a false attack was made against the north of the town,
 2000 men dug the first parallel to a depth of three feet; and on

Sunday the 26th, at five in the morning, eleven batteries, mounted with sixty-five pieces of cannon, opened their fire. The garrison consisted of 5000 men, of whose spirit no doubt was entertained; the fortress was well provided, and its works had been placed in so respectable a state, that Lord Wellington had reason to think it might delay the enemy till late in the season, even if he should be unable to find an opportunity of relieving it. These well-founded expectations were frustrated by one of those chances which sometimes disconcert the wisest plans, and disappoint the surest hopes of man. On the night after the batteries opened, the large powder magazine in the citadel, with two smaller ones contiguous to it, blew up. More than half the artillerymen, a great number of the garrison, and many of the inhabitants, perished in this dreadful explosion; many of the guns were dismounted, and the works were rendered no longer defensible, even if means of defence had been left; but, except a few cartridges for immediate use, and thirty-nine barrels of powder in the laboratory, the whole of the ammunition was destroyed.

Great as the calamity was, the evil would have been far more alarming had it proceeded, as was at first supposed, from treason; but, according to the best information which could be collected, it was altogether accidental: the magazine was bomb-proof; and they were taking ammunition from it, when a shell fell upon one of the carts. The lieutenant-governor had behaved well till the batteries opened; he was then so terrified, that he shut himself up in the bomb-proofs. Having thus proved himself a coward, mere shame made him a traitor: and after the explosion he took advantage of the confusion to counteract the governor's attempt at holding out longer. Another traitor was found in the major of artillery. He had behaved well during the siege; but when he was sent out to propose terms of capitulation, for the purpose of gaining favour with the enemy he communicated to him

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.
August.

*Surrender
of the
place.*

CHAP. the whole extent of the disaster ; so that Massena, knowing the
 XXXII. place was at his mercy, was enabled to dictate what terms he
 1810. pleased. The garrison were made prisoners of war, with this
 exception, that the militia, having deposited their arms, should
 return to their homes, and not serve during the war. It was ten
 at night when the capitulation was concluded ; in the course of
 half an hour the French recommenced their fire upon the town,
 and kept it up till morning, when the Portugueze were assured
 in reply to their remonstrances, that it had been owing to a mis-
 take on the part of the artillery officers : undoubtedly it had been
 so ; but the commander is chargeable with something worse than
 error, for having suffered it to continue through the night with-
 out thinking it worth while to send an order which would in-
 stantly have stopped it.

*Compilaçam
 das Ordens
 do Dia,
 1810, p.
 168.*

*The Portu-
 gueze pri-
 soners enlist
 and desert.*

The terms were broken by the French with their wonted
 perfidy. They tried persuasions first, and employed Alorna and
 the other traitors who were with him to seduce their countrymen.
 Accordingly, when the Portugueze laid down their arms upon
 the esplanade, they were invited to volunteer into the French
 service ; but not a man was found base enough to come forward
 and accept the invitation. On the following day, when the
 troops of the line and the militia had been separated, they were
 tried separately. The troops were told, that unless they accepted
 the alternative which was offered them, they must immediately
 be marched into France ; the hardships which they would suffer
 on their march, and the treatment to which they would be ex-
 posed afterwards, were represented to them in strong terms ; and
 officers and men, with an unanimity which might well have been
 suspected, agreed then to enlist in the enemy's service. They
 found means of informing Marshal Beresford that they did this
 only for the sake of remaining within reach of their own country,
 and making their escape as soon as possible ; and the truth of

this declaration was proved by the numbers who soon rejoined the allied army. Upon this occasion Marshal Beresford acted in a manner becoming the British character. He expressed in general orders his strong disapprobation of such conduct: for the soldiers, he said, some allowance was to be made; they were excusable on the score of their want of education, their undoubted good intention, and their feeling that the enemy with whom they had to deal scrupled at no means, however unworthy, for the attainment of his ends. Yet even in them it was to be discommended, and he doubted not that henceforth those whom the fortune of war might throw into the enemy's hands would take their lot patiently, and suffer any thing rather than bring a stain upon the national honour. Nothing could excuse the officers for conduct so base, so abominable, and so unworthy of the Portuguese name. They had sinned against knowledge, and thereby rendered themselves false and infamous: they had contracted a voluntary engagement with the determination of not keeping it, placing themselves in a miserable predicament, which rendered it only less infamous to break their faith than to observe it. He should therefore report them to their prince, that they might be dismissed with ignominy from the service, and answer for their conduct according to the laws. At the same time he published the names of five officers who, under a proper sense of duty, had withstood the contagion of ill example.

There were three militia regiments in Almeida, those of Trancoso, Guarda, and Arganil. Neither man nor officer of these could be induced to serve against his country, nor self-seduced to tamper with his own conscience. But instead of dismissing them according to the terms, Massena said, that if they would not serve by fair means, they should by force; and gave orders for forming a corps of pioneers, by detaining 200 men and seven officers from each regiment. Marshal Beresford ob-

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.
September.
Condemnation of their conduct.

Militia forced into the French service.

CHAP.
XXXII.

1810.

September.

served upon this, after honourably contrasting the conduct of the militia with that of the regular troops, that the Portuguese, to their misfortune, were too well acquainted with French morality for this iniquity to surprise them: it was but one injury the more which that outraged nation had to revenge, . . . and his army would revenge it. "Never," said he, "even though Almeida is lost, never since the beginning of the war has this kingdom been in so good a state for resisting the enemy. Soldiers of the Portuguese army, if you remember that we have the English army to co-operate with us, which has beaten the enemy whenever it encountered them, . . . if you call to mind who is the commander of that army, and that he is yours also, . . . if you have confidence in him and in yourselves, the invaders never can conquer Portugal. Your general has full confidence in the result, because he confides in the inherent loyalty and valour of the nation, and in its determination of sacrificing every thing to its fidelity, its liberty, and its independence!"

*They escape,
and rejoin
the allies.*

Massena asserted that the Porto regiment hated the English, and therefore he should retain it in his service; but he belied his own assertion by adding that he should keep a watchful eye on the men, and not place them in important posts. If he judged in any degree of the Portuguese people by the few traitorous nobles and fidalgos with whom he was conversant, he was speedily undeceived. A night had not elapsed before great part both of the officers and men were missing, and in less than a fortnight nearly the whole escaped. The men, instead of taking the opportunity of deserting, rejoined their countrymen in arms; and the officers, unconscious of having done any thing unworthy, presented themselves to the commander of the first detachment they could reach, in a condition which pleaded for them, exhausted with fatigue and hunger. They protested, when they found it necessary to excuse themselves, that they had taken no

oath of fidelity to the French, and that to avoid it when it was to be tendered, they had fled at all hazards, not waiting for safer opportunities. A representation in their favour was made by Silveira; and Marshal Beresford in consequence mitigated his former censure. It would, he said, be the greatest satisfaction to him if he should find it confirmed that these officers had not pledged themselves to the enemy; but what he wished to enforce upon them was, that an officer ought to consider not merely the end at which he aims, but the means also by which to bring it about, that both may be alike honourable. He referred their conduct therefore to a council of inquiry, under Silveira.

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.
September.

The Portuguese regency now declared Alorna a traitor, and offered a reward of a thousand moidores for bringing him in alive or dead. The Marquis of Ponte de Lima, the Marquis of Loule, the Count of St. Miguel, the Count of Ega, Gomes Friere de Andrade, and D. José Carcome Lobo, were also declared traitors, and their property declared to be confiscated: but they had powerful friends in the state; and it is said that, notwithstanding the decree, their property remained untouched, in the hands of persons in whom they could confide. A change had lately taken place in the Portuguese regency. The Marquez das Minas resigned, in consequence of an illness which soon proved fatal. The other two members were, the Bishop of Porto, who was Patriarch elect, and the Marquis Monteiro Mor. Four new members were now added; the Principal Sousa, brother to the Conde de Linhares, who was minister in Brazil, and to the Portuguese ambassador in England; the Conde de Redondo; Ricardo Raymundo Nogueira, who had been law professor at Coimbra; and the English ambassador, Mr. Stuart. Admiral Berkeley was at the same time appointed by the Prince of Brazil commander-in-chief of the naval, as Lord Wellington had been

*Changes in
the Portu-
guese re-
gency.*

CHAP. of the military force of Portugal. There are few things in the
 XXXII. annals of Great Britain more honourable to the national cha-
 1810. racter than the perfect confidence reposed in the English nation
September. by its old ally, and the manner in which that confidence was re-
 quited. While the enemies of both countries were endeavouring
 to incense the Portuguese against the English, by telling them
 that the British government designed to usurp Portugal; and
 while the enemies of administration were traducing and insult-
 ing the Portuguese people, crying out that they would not de-
 fend themselves and could not be defended by us, and therefore
 that we ought not to attempt to defend them, the English army
 and the Portuguese people were acting with the most perfect
 unanimity, for the common interests and common safety of
 Great Britain and Portugal.

*Conduct of
 the Portu-
 guese go-
 vernment.*

The spirit of the people, without which all other means of
 defence must have been ineffectual, was what England could
 neither give nor take away; but for the measures by which that
 spirit was so directed as to secure its end, Portugal was indebted
 to British councils. Military and financial resources, of which
 the nation had not supposed itself capable, were called forth;
 and the Portuguese were addressed by their rulers in language
 to which they had long been unaccustomed, . . . the language of
 hope and confidence, and of conscious rectitude as well as con-
 scious strength. Like the Supreme Junta, the regents reminded
 the Portuguese of their heroic ancestors; they spake of the
 wickedness of the enemy, the inexpressible miseries which would
 accompany their yoke, and the certainty of glorious success, if
 those exertions and sacrifices were made which the emergency re-
 quired; but the Portuguese regency did not, like the Spaniards,
 speak to the people of the causes which had rendered this in-
 vasion possible, and produced the decay of Portugal; nor did

they hold out the promise of the restoration of their rights, the redress of their grievances, and the due execution of their laws. Such promises were not necessary as excitement; a people who were literally defending their hearths and altars, and fighting to save their wives and daughters from violation and butchery, or to revenge them, needed no additional feeling to goad them on: as pledges they were not held out; because the government had not the prudence to think of reforming itself. In providing for the defence of the country, it acted providently and bravely, with wisdom and with vigour; but in other things, the old leaven discovered itself, and made it apparent that the pleasure of the minister was still the law of Portugal. A decree was published, assigning to the widows, children, or dependent brethren of those who had fallen at Almeida, the full pay of the deceased, and half pay to the families of those who were made prisoners. "The Prince," it said, "would not believe that any of his faithful vassals could have entered the service of the enemy; and if any had been compelled to do so, he trusted they had only yielded to compulsion, with the purpose of effecting their escape. He suspended, therefore, his justice; but if a month elapsed before such persons acquitted themselves by appearing, they would be considered as traitors." Now, the treason of the lieutenant-governor and the major of artillery was open and undoubted: Lord Wellington had stated it in his dispatches to the minister at war; their names were given in those dispatches here in England, but suppressed in Portugal, out of favour to their connexions.

In another respect the conduct of the Portuguese regency was more inexcusable. Eight-and-forty persons, of all ranks and professions, and many of them unacquainted with each other, were seized in the night; ten of them were sent to the Tower of St. Julian, and the rest to the Limoeiro, the common

CHAP.
XXXII.1810.
September.*Arbitrary
arrests at
Lisbon.*

CHAP. prison of the city. The most alarming rumours were scattered
XXXII. abroad. A formidable and extensive conspiracy, it was said,
1810. had been discovered, which had nothing less for its object than
September. a general massacre of the British, for the purpose of delivering
up the country to the French. These reports reached England,
and received their first contradiction from the Portuguese go-
vernment themselves, who found it expedient to declare, that
neither Lord Wellington nor Mr. Stuart had any part in their
proceedings upon this occasion; that the stories of the con-
spiracy, and of the arms which had been discovered, were false;
and that the individuals who had been arrested had been sent
out of the kingdom, only because it was the opinion of the police
that their residence in it might be prejudicial to the public
tranquillity. Some of these individuals were permitted to come
to England, others were sent to the Azores, after they had suf-
fered every kind of inconvenience, privation, and indignity, to
the alarm and distress of the families of all, and the ruin of
some; . . . there was neither proof nor accusation against them;
the whole, as a public act, was one of those acts which mark the
unheeding and unfeeling folly of an ignorant and obstinate de-
spotism, but of which the secret springs are to be found in private
malice or cupidity.

The manner in which the Portuguese government declared,
that neither Marshal General Lord Wellington, nor the minister
plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, nor any individual of
the British nation, had any part in these proceedings, nor any
previous knowledge of them, make it apparent that the British
general and the British minister disapproved of an act of tyranny
which was thus in reality disclaimed on their part. They could
not prevent that of which they were not apprised before it was
done, nor after it was done could they express their disapproba-
tion better than by requiring to have it thus distinctly stated,

that the regency had neither acted upon their advice, nor received their sanction. It was the more to be regretted, because the other measures of the government entitled them to respect and gratitude. They had restored order in the country, and brought its resources into action, and their public acts and declarations corresponded to the spirit of the people. The ringleaders of the mutiny, which, in its consequences, had given Soult possession of Porto, were brought to trial and condign punishment; and after the most impartial examination of his conduct, General Bernardim Freire de Andrada, who had been murdered at Braga, was declared to have served his country faithfully and well, and the memory of those unfortunate men who perished in the same tumult was cleared of all imputation. An army more numerous than Portugal had ever before possessed was formed, equipped, and disciplined; and the government, when it reminded the people of their strength, did not fear to tell them of their danger. It announced the loss of Almeida, .. "a loss," said the regents, "greatly to be lamented for the death of part of its defenders, and the unhappiness of others, who have thus fallen into captivity, but of little importance to the great cause of the salvation of the country. Wellington at the head of the allied armies; Beresford directing our troops, who are indebted to him for their organization and their discipline; brave soldiers, and a faithful people, who have sworn to defend their prince and their native land to the last extremity; these are the bulwarks which defend us; and these an army of slaves, who are continually wasting away by want and desertion, will never be able to beat down."

The Portugeze, and those especially who were intrusted with the government of their country, cannot be extolled above their merits, for the spirit which they displayed at this crisis, the most momentous, and to ordinary minds the most appalling of the whole war. Their merit is the greater because there was

CHAP.
XXXII.

1810.

September.

Apprehensions of the British government.

CHAP. not that vigour in the British cabinet which the emergency re-
XXXII. quired; and because with all their confidence in British fidelity,
1810. they could not have been without some apprehension of seeing
September. the defence of Portugal abandoned by Great Britain. The enemy
had exultingly proclaimed that the English would fly to their
ships, and some colour for the boast was afforded by the fact
that a fleet large enough to receive the troops was lying in the
Tagus, and evidently detained there for such a service. The
heavy baggage of the army was actually kept on board; and
Lord Wellington was at that time acting under instructions of a
character to excite in him any thing rather than confidence or
hope. They were to this effect, that his majesty would be better
pleased if the army were withdrawn too soon, than that its em-
barkation should be endangered by the least delay. Such in-
structions must inevitably have drawn on the disgrace and ruin
which they anticipated, if they had been addressed to a man of
inferior capacity, or meaner mind. A want of courage and of
generosity was implied in them which is but too characteristic
of British ministries. Instead of assuring the commander of
support, whatever might be the issue, if nothing on his part were
left undone, he was made to understand that any risk which he
incurred must be upon his own responsibility, and that any dis-
aster which he might sustain would be imputed to his decision.
But Providence was with us, and directed the course of events
to a glorious and happy issue, notwithstanding our repeated
errors.

Lord Wellington had the farther mortification of knowing
that the army, satisfied as he was with its conduct in all respects,
partook that despondency which the pestilent activity of a faction
at home was continually labouring to produce, and which the
events of the campaign had hitherto tended to confirm. His
plans had been long meditated and wisely formed; but the rea-

sonable expectations which he founded upon them were disappointed by the accident that drew after it the fall of Almeida. That place might easily have held out till the autumnal rains should have rendered it impossible for the French to advance, and scarcely practicable for them to have subsisted their army upon that frontier. To gain time at this juncture was for him to gain every thing: here he thought to have wintered in the sure expectation that every day would render the Portuguese troops more efficient, and with the reasonable hope that through Marquis Wellesley's influence in the cabinet he should receive such reinforcements as would enable him to act upon the offensive. Accident had frustrated this intent; the enemy were enabled to advance, elated with their fortune, and relying upon it as the only divinity in which they were encouraged to trust; and Massena, whose plans had hitherto succeeded beyond his calculations, and even to the extent of his hopes, had the advantage of relying upon the disposition as well as the efficiency of his army, and the full support of a government which placed ample means at his command, crippled him with no restrictions, and threatened him with no responsibility.

Upon the fall of Almeida Lord Wellington's head-quarters were removed to Gouvea, and the whole of his infantry retired to the rear of Celorico, the outposts continuing in advance of that town. Massena waited till he had been joined by Regnier's corps, consisting of 17,000 men, which having acted with little success against Romana in Extremadura, had crossed the Tagus at Barca de Alconete, early in July. According to the plan which Buonaparte had laid down for the conquest of Portugal, this corps was to have moved by the right bank of the Tagus upon Abrantes; but this design having been altered when the allied army was found more numerous and efficient than the French cabinet had supposed, Regnier had moved upon Zarza-

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.
September.

*Movements
of Regnier's
corps, and
of General
Hill.*

CHAP. mayor, Penamacor, and Monsanto, in the hope of striking a
 XXXII. blow against Lieutenant-General Hill, who had advanced with
 1810. 13,000 men from Abrantes to Portalegre, for the purpose of
September. supporting Romana. The French hoped either that he would
 expose himself to an attack, or that Lord Wellington might be
 tempted to make a movement against Regnier, of which Massena
 was prepared to take advantage; but the British generals were
 not thus to be circumvented: and Massena, as well as Lord
 Wellington, directing his attention to a single object, Regnier
 joined the invading force, while Hill was stationed at Sarzedas,
 to cover the road upon Abrantes to Lisbon, or move to Ponte de
 Murcella, and unite with the main body on the line of its retreat:
 in either case Major-General Leith's division, which was kept at
 Thomar in reserve to support him, was to take the same direction.

*Massena
 advances
 into Portu-
 gal.*

Had Massena despised the allied army in truth as he affected
 to do, he would now have marched by Castello Branco, Abrantes,
 and Santarem, direct upon Lisbon, leaving Lord Wellington
 behind him; but he remembered the fate of Junot, and had too
 much respect for the enemy with whom he had to contend. Re-
 lying, however, upon numbers and fortune, and taking into ac-
 count the indecision and timidity which seemed to characterize
 the British counsels, he expected that Lord Wellington, being
 too weak to risk a battle, would retreat, if not fly before him,
 with no other hope than that of reaching the ships and
 securing his embarkation. Under this imagination he or-
 dered the French army to provide itself for seventeen days, by
 which time he expected to finish the campaign triumphantly.
 The only impediment which he apprehended on the way was
 from the difficulty of transport. For this reason very few women
 were allowed to accompany the army; they were left at Ciudad
 Rodrigo, where so many had assembled to share in the spoils and
 pleasures of Lisbon with their friends and husbands, that the

place, because of the round of gaieties which was there kept up, was called Little Paris. From thence they were to follow when the easy conquest should be completed; and this was thought so certain, that engagements were made for parties to be given in the capital. With this confidence, and this levity of mind, the French entered upon their third invasion of Portugal. They began their march in three bodies, Junot's corps with the artillery and cavalry proceeding by Pinhel and Trancoso, Ney's by Alverca, and Regnier's by Guarda. At the same time, Lord Wellington, aware of the enemy's intent, began to retreat towards Coimbra deliberately, and with such evident forethought and determination, that this retrograde movement did not in the slightest degree abate the spirits of the army. No stores were abandoned, no men and horses foundered; the operations were all performed with regularity and ease; the soldiers suffered no privations, and underwent no unnecessary fatigue; the inhabitants retired under their protection, and assisted them in breaking up the bridges, destroying the mills, and laying waste the country; so that Massena found a desert as he advanced. In the town of Celorico there were only two inhabitants, and nothing but bare walls. At that place the corps of Regnier and Ney effected their junction. The appearance of the former made it evident that there was no intention of acting upon the Tagus; and it appeared also, upon their taking the road by Fornos, that it was Massena's intention to proceed upon the right side of the Mondego, not upon the left by way of Penalva and Ponte de Murcella, where he thought Lord Wellington would be prepared to resist him in a strong position: he calculated upon turning this position, and so making himself master of Coimbra and the resources which the fertile country about that city would supply. But he did not calculate upon the foresight and decision of the British General, nor upon the spirit of the Portuguese.

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XXXII.

1810.

*September.**Ney and
Regnier's
join him at
Celorico.*

CHAP.
XXXII.

1810.

September.

Sept. 20.

people: he hoped to delude them by promises, and to find them as he advanced remaining patiently in their towns and villages, in expectation of the conquest which awaited them. With this intent he gave orders that the troops should halt before they entered Viseu, till the inhabitants might be assured of protection for themselves and their property. No persons were found abroad there; the soldiers were still forbidden to enter any house forcibly on pain of severe punishment, and Massena himself remained a while in the streets, expecting the effect of his condescending patience. Night was setting in, and the word was at length given that the soldiers might quarter themselves. The doors were presently broken open, . . . but neither inhabitants nor provisions were there; every thing had been carried away, all had fled; even no lights were to be found, except those which were burning in the churches. The only living souls remaining there were a few poor wretches in the hospital, who were in too pitiable a state for removal: one medical attendant had been left with them; he also had fled upon the entrance of the French, but upon the information of his patients he was pursued and overtaken, and ordered to continue at his post, and assure the town's-people when they ventured back that no ill treatment was to be apprehended from the French conquerors.

*The French
army col-
lected at
Viseu.*

Here Junot, with the artillery and cavalry, joined the army; but this junction, which completed the concentration of the French force, was impeded by Colonel Trant with some Portuguese militia and dragoons, who attacked the convoy near Tojal. Had this enterprise been executed as well as it was planned and timed, a blow might have been inflicted which the enemy would have felt severely; but the French, by their prompt discipline and judicious boldness, deterred the militia from pursuing their success, and the park fell back on Trancoso. This delay, however, was no light advantage for the allies: it compelled Massena to

*Jones's Ac-
count of the
War, i. 297.*

remain two days at Viseu waiting for his artillery, and the time thus gained enabled Lord Wellington to collect his force upon the ground whereon, now that Massena's movements were foreseen, he had determined to withstand him.

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.
September.

On the day after the French commander arrived at Viseu, General Hill joined the British army at Ponte de Murcella; the bridge was destroyed, and he was left there with his division, while the rest of the army crossed the Mondego, and Lord Wellington himself proceeded to the Serra de Busaco, a mountainous ridge eight miles in length, and terminating precipitously on the Mondego; the Serra de Murcella, in like manner, terminating on the opposite bank. By daylight on the following morning the light division and the cavalry, with General Pack's Portuguese brigade, assembled in the plain of Mortagoa, having their picquets upon the Criz; the bridge over that little river was destroyed. That day the enemy appeared in sight, and on the morrow, about three in the afternoon, drove in the picquets; some skirmishing ensued, the allies retreated to the rear of the plain, and at night began their march over the Serra. The place appointed for their bivouac was on the other side, two leagues distant, but the acclivity was so steep, that owing to this cause, and to the impediment occasioned by the breaking down of some artillery waggons, they did not reach it till it was daylight. It was generally supposed in the army at this time that no stand would be made, but Lord Wellington's determination soon became apparent. Had his army indeed been numerous enough to have occupied the whole ridge, no enemy could have ventured to attack him there, the ascent being too steep for cavalry, and the height of the position above the ground in its front such as to render the use of artillery on the part of the assailants almost unavailing: occupied as it was, it was impregnable. The general elevation of the ridge is from nine to

Lord Wel-
lington
crosses to
the Serra
de Busaco.
Sept. 21.

CHAP. twelve hundred feet, and it is crossed by two roads, both leading
 XXXII. from the north to Coimbra, the one passing near the convent,
 1810. the other about a league to the southward.

September.

Busaco.

General
 Mackin-
 non's Jour-
 nal, p. 74.

Busaco, which was now to become famous in British and Portuguese history, had long been a venerable name in Portugal. It is the only place in that kingdom where the barefooted Carmelites possessed what in monastic language is called a desert; by which term an establishment is designated where those brethren whose piety flies the highest pitch may at once enjoy the advantages of the eremite and the discipline of the cœnobite life, and thus indulge the heroism of ascetic devotion in security. The convent, surrounded by an extensive and almost impervious wood, stands in what may be called the crater of the loftiest part of the ridge: its precincts, which included a circumference of about four miles, were walled in. Within that circuit were various chapels and religious stations; and on the summit of the mountain, which is within the inclosure, a stone cross was erected of enormous size, upon so huge a foundation, that three thousand cart-loads of stone were employed in constructing its base. The cells of the brethren were round the church*, not in a regular building, but accommodated to the irregularities of the ground, and lined with cork, which was every where used instead of wood because of the dampness of the situation. Every cell had its garden and its water-course for irrigating it, the cultivation of these little spots being the only recreation which the inhabitants allowed themselves as lawful. In one of these gardens the first cedars which grew in Portugal were raised. It was indeed one of those places where man has converted an

* The author of *Der Feldzug von Portugal in den Jahren 1811 und 1812* (Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1816) is mistaken in calling it the burial-place of the kings of Portugal.

earthly Paradise into a Purgatory for himself, but where superstition almost seems sanctified by every thing around it. Lord Wellington's head-quarters were in the convent; and the solitude and silence of Busaco were now broken by events, in which its hermits, dead as they were to the world, might be permitted to partake all the agitations of earthly hope and fear.

CHAP.
XXXII.
1810.
September.

On the 26th Generals Hill and Leith joined the army. This corps had made so rapid and arduous a march, that Massena regarded its junction as impossible, and reckoned therefore that the force which he wished to attack must necessarily be weak in front, if indeed Lord Wellington should venture to give him battle. That general arrived on the same day at Mortagoa, and the bridge over the Criz was re-established for his artillery, the army having crossed at a ford a little way above. Some skirmishing took place, and at S. Antonio do Cantaro the French were resisted in a manner which made them first apprehend that a determined stand was to be made against them. Massena himself upon this reconnoitred the position, after which he asked one of the unworthy Portugeze who accompanied him, if he thought the allies would give him battle? He was answered, that undoubtedly they would, seeing they showed themselves in such strength. The French Marshal replied, I cannot persuade myself that Lord Wellington will risk the loss of his reputation; but if he does, . . . I have him! To-morrow we shall effect the conquest of Portugal; and in a few days I shall drown the leopard!

*Relaçam da
Campanha
de Massena.
Investiga-
dor Portu-
guez, vol. vi.
59.*

About two on the following morning the French army was in motion. Ney's corps formed in close column on the right, at the foot of the hill, and on the road which leads to the convent; Regnier's on the left, upon the southern road which passes by S. Antonio do Cantaro; Junot's was in the centre, and in reserve; the cavalry was in the rear, the ground not permitting it to act. The allied British and Portugeze army was posted along the ridge

*Battle of
Busaco.
Sept. 27.*

CHAP.
XXXII.

1810.

September.

of the Serra, forming the segment of a circle, the extreme points of which embraced every part of the enemy's position, and from whence every movement on their part could be immediately observed. The troops had bivouacked that night in position, as they stood: Lord Wellington in the wood near the centre, the general officers at the heads of their divisions and brigades. The orders were that all should stand to their arms before daylight; and the whole army were in high spirits, deeming themselves sure of an action, and of success. Before day-break the rattling of the enemy's carriages was heard, and a few of their guns were brought to fire upon a smaller number of British ones which had been placed to command the road. At dawn the action began on the right, and after some firing by the light troops in advance of the position, the enemy attacked a village which was in front of the light division, and which, though its possession was of advantage to the French, Lord Wellington chose rather to let them occupy, than suffer an action to be brought on upon less favourable ground than that which he had chosen, and where he was sure of success. The nature of the ground, upon which this assurance was founded, facilitated the enemy's movements to a certain degree, but no farther; its steepness and its inequalities covered their ascent, and they gained the summit with little loss. Regnier's corps was the first that was seriously engaged: it ascended at a part where there were only a few light troops; and being thus enabled to deploy without opposition, the French possessed themselves for a moment, in considerable strength, of a point within the line. Their first column was received by the 88th regiment alone, part of Major-General Mackinnon's brigade, which was presently reinforced by half the 45th, and soon afterwards by the 8th Portuguese: their second found the 74th, with the 9th and 21st Portuguese, ready to receive them on the right. Being repulsed there, they tried the centre with no better fortune; the

remainder of Major-General Picton's division coming up, he charged them with the bayonet, and dislodged them, greatly superior in numbers as they were, from the strong ground which they had gained; at the same time, Major-General Leith arriving with a brigade on their flank, joined in the charge, and they were driven down the hill with great slaughter, leaving 700 dead upon the ground. Few prisoners were taken.

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1810.
September.

Marshal Ney meantime was not more fortunate with his division. Part of it he formed in column of mass, and ordered it to ascend upon the right of the village which he had occupied. They came up in the best possible order, though not without suffering considerably from the light infantry; the ground, however, covered them in part by its steepness. Major-General Craufurd, who commanded on that side, judiciously made his troops withdraw just behind the crest of the ridge whereon they were formed: he himself remained in front, on horseback, observing the enemy. No sooner had they reached the summit than the guns of his division opened a destructive fire upon them; and the men appearing suddenly at a distance only of some twenty paces, advanced and charged. Instantly the French were broken: the foremost regiments of the column were almost destroyed, and those who escaped fled down the steep declivity, running, sliding, or rolling, as they could. General Simon, who commanded the column, was wounded and taken. Massena was now convinced that the attack could not succeed, and therefore halted the support at the foot of the hill. He endeavoured to decoy Lord Wellington out of a position which had been proved impregnable; but the British commander persisted in the sure system on which he had resolved, and the remainder of the day was employed in skirmishing between the light troops. They were directed to retire when pressed, and give the enemy an opportunity of repeating the attack. But the enemy had received

CHAP.
XXXII.

1810.

September.

*Memoirs of
the Early
Campaigns,
171.*

*Behaviour
of the Por-
tuguese
troops.*

too severe a lesson to venture upon a repetition, and as night approached they were drawn off to some distance, near the ground where Junot and the reserve were stationed. The village which they had been allowed to occupy in the morning still remained in their possession. Major-General Craufurd sent to the officer who commanded there, saying it was necessary for his corps, and requiring him to abandon it. The reply was, that he would die in defence of the post with which he was intrusted. This tone was neither called for by the occasion nor justified by the event. Six guns were immediately opened upon him; some companies of the 43d and of the Rifle Corps were ordered to charge the village; the French were instantly driven out, and the advanced post of the light division resumed possession.

Victories of greater result at the time have been gained in Portugal, but never was a battle fought there of more eventual importance to the Portuguese nation; for the Portuguese troops, whom the French despised, whom the enemies of the ministry in England reviled, and whom perhaps many of the British army till then mistrusted, established that day their character both for courage* and for discipline, and proved, that however the government and the institutions of that kingdom had been perverted and debased, the people had not degenerated. Lord Wellington bore testimony to their deserts: he declared that he had never seen a more gallant attack than that which they made upon the enemy who had reached the ridge of the Serra; they were worthy, he said, of contending in the same ranks with the British troops in that good cause, which they afforded the best

* Some of the Portuguese charging a superior force got so wedged in among the French, that they had not room to use their bayonets; they turned up the butt ends of their muskets, and plied them with such vigour, that they presently cleared the way.

hopes of saving. Marshal Beresford bestowed high and deserved praise upon them in general orders; and the opportunity was taken of granting a free pardon to all who were under arrest for military offences, that they might rejoin their regiments, and emulate their comrades, to whose good conduct they were indebted for this forgiveness; but persons who had been apprehended for robbery or murder were excepted from the amnesty, for these, it was properly observed, were not to be considered merely as military crimes. After* this battle, the knighthood of the Bath was conferred on Marshal Beresford, in consideration of those exertions by which the Portuguese troops had been qualified to bear their part in it so honourably.

The loss of the British in this memorable action amounted to 107 killed, 493 wounded, and 31 taken; that of the Portuguese to 90 killed, 512 wounded, and twenty taken. One French general, three colonels, thirty-three officers, and 250 men were made prisoners; 2000 were left dead on the field; the number was ascertained, because Massena sent a flag of truce requesting permission to bury them; it was not thought proper to comply with the request, and they were buried by the conquerors. Most of their wounded, who were very † numerous, were left to the mercy of the peasants; General Craufurd, whose division was the last that withdrew from the Serra, saved as many as he could from their hands, and lodged them in the convent. Unground maize was found in the knapsacks of the French.

* Ten ensigns commissions were sent out after this action by the commander-in-chief to Lord Wellington, as rewards for the same number of non-commissioned officers who had distinguished themselves.

† The Portuguese officer who was with Massena, and whose journal is printed in the *Investigador Portuguez*, states the number of killed and wounded whom the French left on the ground at 4600.

CHAP.
XXXII.

1810.

*September.**Massena
marches in-
to the Porto
road.*

Massena having in person directed the operations of the day, had purchased at some cost the conviction that his boast was not here to be realized. He consulted with Ney, Regnier, Junot, and Freirion; and they called in the Portuguese traitors to inquire of them by what course a position might be turned, which they found themselves unable to force. None of these unworthy men happened to be acquainted with that part of the country; the French commander turned from them in evident displeasure, as if they ought to have possessed the information of which he stood in need, and he ordered General Montbrun out with a strong detachment to explore the ways, telling him to send Generals St. Croix and Lamotte in different directions on the same service. On the following day two peasants were brought in; promises could draw nothing from them, but they yielded to threats of torture and death, and informed the enemy that there was a * pass over the Serra de Caramula, communicating with the great road between Porto and Coimbra, and coming into it near Sardam. By this course Massena immediately determined to proceed. There had been skirmishing throughout the morning between the light troops; the better to conceal their movements, the French set fire to the woods; but the summit of Busaco commands a most extensive † prospect over the whole country: early in the afternoon a large body of their horse and foot was observed in motion from the left of their centre to the rear, and from thence their cavalry

* There are in fact three passes over this Serra, all of them practicable for cavalry.

† Cardoso says, that to the east the Serra de Castello Rodrigo may be distinguished, which is thirty leagues off, the Serra de Minde to the south, and that of Grijo to the north, fifteen leagues distant. Westward is the mouth of the Mondego and the coast.

were seen in march along the road leading from Mortagoa, over the mountain, toward Porto. Lord Wellington at once apprehended their purpose, and perceived that it was now too late to prevent or to impede it.

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Orders had been dispatched from the Ponte de Murcella on the 19th to Colonel Trant, who was then acting as Brigadier with some Portuguese militia, that he should occupy the villages of Sardam and Aguada. The division which he commanded formed part of the force under General Bacellar, who was then at Moimenta da Beira, and whose instructions were to consider the defence of the Douro, and more especially of Porto as his principal object. The orders were that Trant should march by S. Pedro do Sul, which was the nearest line, but the worst road, and through a country exhausted of provisions, in consequence of the passage of the enemy by Viseu, and the abandonment of the intermediate district by its inhabitants. Partly for these considerations General Bacellar directed him to make a circuit by Porto, but chiefly because he had ascertained that a French detachment of 1500 men had entered S. Pedro; and because he considered it his main business to provide for the protection of Porto, which he also supposed to be Lord Wellington's object in ordering this movement. Trant proposed to attack the enemy at S. Pedro, and force his way, if possible; Bacellar would not permit him to make the attempt, because he thought it too hazardous for troops like his; and Trant in consequence took the circuitous route. He left his men near the points which he had been instructed to occupy, early on the morning after the battle, and proceeded to the head-quarters at Busaco, where he arrived before eleven in the forenoon, and was then first apprised that it had been intended he should occupy the village of Boyalva, and defend the pass over the Serra de Caramula. He offered instantly to return and occupy the intended ground;

*Colonel
Trant's
movements.*

Sept. 28.

CHAP. and there was time for doing it, but the offer was declined.
 XXXII. Lord Wellington had not detached any part of his own army to
 1810. these passes, because in case of failure, the troops must have
September. been cut off from the main body; whereas the Portuguese, if
 compelled to retire, might fall back upon Porto, according to
 their destination. Had the ground been stronger than it was,
 it was not to be supposed that 1500 militia could maintain it
 against Massena's army; for to that number Trant's force was
 reduced, the men having marched 190 miles in nine successive
 days, and many, while traversing the district in which they
 were raised, had absented themselves, without leave, to revisit
 their families. They might possibly have held it long enough
 to bring on a general action, if Lord Wellington had thought it
 advisable again to venture one; but the same motives which
 withheld him from giving battle for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo,
 or Almeida, influenced him still: he had indeed more confidence
 in the Portuguese troops, but the other reasons existed in their
 full strength: adhering to his long concerted plans, which were
 laid for sure though slow success, he determined upon com-
 mitting nothing to the mere fortune of war; Trant therefore re-
 turned to Sardam, to act as opportunity might offer, and Lord
 Wellington during the night withdrew his army from Busaco.
 General Hill recrossed the Mondego, retiring toward Santarem
 by way of Thomar, and Lord Wellington marched on Coimbra,
 leaving Craufurd with a few piquets on the Serra, where he per-
 formed the humane office of providing for the wounded French,
 who had been abandoned by their countrymen, for want of means
 to remove them.

*The allies
 withdraw
 saco.*

*Trant re-
 treats to the
 Vouga.*

On the evening of the 28th the enemy's cavalry entered
 Boyalva, driving in a picquet of the Light Dragoons. It is an
 open village, on the western slope of the hill, where there is no
 defile, and where the ground is not broken. Trant was then at

Sardam, where, during the following day and night, he occupied one half the united villages, the enemy's cavalry occupying the other. As he could no longer be of service here, and was aware that he should be attacked in the course of the day if he remained longer, early on the 30th he resolved to retire behind the Vouga. La Croix, who, with a column of horse, was scouring the country upon the right flank of the invading army, fell in with his outposts, attacked them, and drove them in with the loss of one officer and * five-and-twenty men. The infantry, by good fortune, had effected their passage; they formed in defence of the bridge, and La Croix having no infantry, did not attempt to force it. The Vouga was at this time fordable, and therefore Trant marched in the night to Oliveira, on the Porto road, from whence, if it should be necessary, he could in one day reach the Douro, and cross it for the defence of that city. There were then no other troops to defend it, and if the enemy had pursued, Porto might have been a second time in their power. That this was not done is not surprising, because it did not consist with the scheme of Massena's operations; but that the French should have neglected so fair an opportunity of dispersing Trant's force, which if not dispersed might be expected presently to harass their rear, must be accounted among those errors with which the whole course of human events is marked, and in which the religious mind perceives the superintendence of a higher power than man.

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The allies being on the shorter line to Coimbra, were sufficiently in advance of the enemy for all their movements to be conducted with the same coolness and order which had characterized the whole retreat. On the 30th the infantry crossed from Coimbra

*The allies
cross the
Mondego.*

* A loss which was magnified to 500 in Massena's dispatches.

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XXXII.

1810.

October.

Oct. 1.

into the great Lisbon road. The rear-guard of cavalry bivouacked in front of Fornos, and remained bridled up all night, in a very dangerous situation, the enemy having pushed a strong force close to them. In the morning they were driven in some confusion through Fornos by a large body of horse and foot: they formed on the great plain of Coimbra, and the French seeing the three brigades of cavalry with six guns of the horse artillery ready to receive them, did not venture to leave the inclosures. Before noon the rear-guard received orders to retire, and crossed the Mondego accordingly at the fords near S. Martinho do Bispo. The enemy pushed on their horse, came up just as the passage had been effected, and attempted to cross, as if in pursuit: they were charged, and driven back by a squadron of the 16th, after which they dismounted, and fired with their carbines ineffectually across the river. The passage might have been defended with good prospect of success, but this was not consistent with Lord Wellington's plans, which were to draw the French to a point where they should be at the greatest distance from their resources, and where his own would be at hand.

*Flight of
the inhabit-
ants from
Coimbra.*

When it was known in Coimbra that the enemy were approaching, and the retreat of the British made it evident that the city would be at their mercy, a cry soon arose that the French had actually entered, and the whole of the inhabitants who had not yet provided for their safety ran shrieking toward the bridge. On all other sides they were cut off from flight. The bridge, which is long and narrow, was presently choked by the crowd of fugitives; and multitudes in the hurry of their fear rushed into the Mondego, and made their way through the water, which was in many parts three or four feet deep. The gateway, which was the city prison, is near the bridge, and the screams of the prisoners, who beheld this scene of terror from their grates, and expected something far more dreadful from the cruelty of the

French than they had reason to apprehend from the laws of their own country, were heard amid all the uproar and confusion. Lord Wellington heard them, and in compassion sent his aide-de-camp, Lord March, to set them at liberty.

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Massena expected to find great resources in Coimbra, a large and flourishing city situated in the finest part of a beautiful and fertile country. He found it utterly deserted, like every place which the French had hitherto entered on their march. With the intent of securing the stores, he forbade all pillage, and gave orders that only the brigade which was to be left in garrison there should enter. In defiance of these orders Junot commanded his men to make their way in, and break open the houses, as the owners had thought proper to abandon them. Such directions were eagerly obeyed; the men forced the guard, which, in pursuance of Massena's instructions, had been stationed at the gate of S. Sophia; the other troops immediately joined them in their occupation, and Massena neither attempted to enforce his own orders, nor manifested any displeasure during the scene of wanton waste and havoc which ensued. The magazines of the allied army had been removed, and Montbrun, who was dispatched to Figueira for the chance of overtaking them there, arrived too late: but provision enough, it is said, was found in Coimbra to have served the enemy for a month's consumption, if proper measures had been adopted for its preservation. The people who so unanimously forsook their homes had had neither time nor means for removing their property. So long as it was uncertain in which direction the invaders would move, and while a possibility remained that they might be successfully resisted upon the way, the people of Coimbra had lived in hope that this dire necessity might be averted; and when it came upon them, so many cars were

The French
enter Coim-
bra.

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*The Portu-
gueze people
fly before the
enemy.*

required for the sick and wounded, and other services of the enemy, that few or none were left for them.

It is the custom throughout the south of India, that when a hostile army approaches, the natives bury their treasure, forsake their houses, take with them as much food as they can carry, and seek the protection of some strong place, or conceal themselves among the woods and mountains. People in these deplorable circumstances are called the Wulsa of the district. The Wulsa has never been known to depart on the approach of a British force, if unaccompanied by Indian allies. This, however, is no peculiar honour of the British name; it belongs rather to the European character, for no such spectacle had ever been exhibited in European warfare till the present campaign. The orders of the Regency and of the commander-in-chief might have been issued in vain, if the Portugueze people had not from cruel experience felt the necessity of this measure for their individual safety. The alternative was dreadful, and yet better than that of remaining at the mercy of such invaders. It was a miserable sight to see them accompanying the columns of the retreating army, well-ordered as the movements of that army were, and resolutely, as on the few occasions which were offered, it met and checked the pursuers. All ranks and conditions were confounded in the general calamity: families accustomed to the comforts of a delightful climate and fruitful country followed the troops on foot; there was no security for age, or sex, or * childhood, but in flight. Every thing was left behind them

* The under-gardener of the Botanical Garden at Coimbra, with his family, consisting of his wife (a young woman of eighteen, with an infant at the breast) and her mother, having tarried too long to accompany the army, was overtaken in the little town of Soure by some stragglers from the enemy's advanced guard, who were

except what the women could carry ; for even in this extremity the men very generally observed the national prejudice, which deems it disgraceful for man to bear a burthen.

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*Hopes and
expectations
of the
French.*

Boastful as the French commander was, and confident in his own fortune, and in the hitherto unchecked prosperity of the Emperor Napoleon, the battle of Busaco made him apprehend that the enterprise in which he had engaged was not so easy as he had imagined, nor so free from all risk of disasters. There were not fewer than 5000 sick and wounded whom it was necessary to leave at Coimbra ; as many more had been left at Busaco dead on the field, or abandoned there because their condition was hopeless, or for want of means to remove them. But a loss of 10,000 men upon his march, without any commensurate

in search of plunder. These miscreants secured the husband by fastening his hands behind him : they tied the mother in the same manner ; the villain then, to whom the wife was allotted, either by agreement among them, or by virtue of his authority, endeavoured to tear the infant from her arms, that he might proceed to violate her in presence of her mother and her husband. Failing in this, and enraged at a resistance which he had not expected, he drew back a few yards, presented his musket, and swore he would fire at her if she did not yield. " Fire, devil !" was her immediate reply, and at the word she and her infant fell by the same shot. The ruffians stripped her body, and compelled the husband to carry the clothes on his back to Thomar, whither they carried him prisoner. During his detention there he pointed out the murderer to a Portuguese nobleman then serving with Massena ; but whatever this traitor may have felt at the crime, he did not venture to report it to the French commander, and demand justice upon the criminal : the hopes of co-operation on the part of the Portuguese people which he had held out had been proved so utterly false, that Massena treated him with contemptuous dislike, and moreover every thing was permitted to their soldiers by the French generals in that atrocious campaign. The gardener effected his escape to Coimbra, where a subscription was raised for him, but he soon died, broken-hearted. The man himself related this tragedy to the British officer, from whom I received it. It is recorded here as an example of the spirit which the invaders frequently found in those Portuguese women who were unfortunate enough to fall into their hands.

CHAP. diminution of the allies, had not been allowed for in his calcula-
 XXXII. tions; and he found himself unable to leave a guard of sufficient
 1810. strength at Coimbra, without weakening his army too much.
October. He thought therefore that the surest course by which he could
 secure his sick and wounded was to pursue the English with all
 his force, and drive them out of the country, for he still per-
 suaded himself that they were flying to their ships. This opinion
 he expressed in dispatches which were intercepted. The other
 generals partook the same delusion; they no longer despised the
 British troops, but they had not yet been taught to respect the
 councils of the British government, and the nature of its policy
 they could neither believe nor comprehend; for it appeared
 to them incredible that any government should act upon prin-
 ciples of integrity and honour. They supposed that Lord Wel-
 lington would embark as soon as he reached Lisbon, and that it
 was his intention to carry off as many of the Portuguese youth
 as he could get on board, by way of securing some compensation
 for the expenses of the war!

*Confusion
 at Condeixa*

With these expectations they followed the retreating army,
 not with the ardour of pursuit, but ready to avail themselves of
 any opportunity that might present itself, and cautious how they
 offered any to an enemy whom they no longer affected to despise.
 The single occasion which occurred in their favour they were not
 near enough to seize. It was at Condeixa (the Conimbrica of
 the Romans); the town is built on the ridge of the hill, and the
 road passes through it along a narrow street: the people of the
 vicinity crowded in simultaneously with the troops, and the
 inhabitants at the same time hurried to join in a retreat which
 they had delayed till the last minute. They were in great alarm,
 the way was blocked up by some of the country carts, and had
 it not been for the good discipline which the troops observed in
 this scene of confusion, and the exertions of the officers, the

enemy might have obtained no inconsiderable advantage. But they were not near enough to profit by the favourable opportunity: order was restored in time; and this was the only moment of serious danger during the whole retreat. Massena pushed forward to this town, without halting at Coimbra; but he found it necessary to remain here three days, for the purpose of resting his troops and collecting such provisions as the inhabitants had not been able to remove, and the retreating army had left untouched. As the enemy advanced, the allies retired a march or two before them; the infantry proceeded with as little molestation as if they had been marching through a country which was in peace; the cavalry covered the retreat, and no stragglers were to be seen.

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Some skirmishing took place near Pombal, with trifling loss on the part of the allies, and more on that of the enemy. Ney and Junot took this line of march, while Regnier advanced upon the road to Thomar. Leiria was forsaken by its whole population: a city thus deserted offered such temptation, that discipline could not be maintained in the retreating army without some examples of severity, and one British and one native soldier were punished with death for breaking into a chapel and plundering it. Here the allied army divided, one part taking the road to Alcobaça, the other to Rio Mayor. The monks of Alcobaça performed on this occasion toward the British officers their last act of hospitality. Most of them had already departed from the magnificent and ancient abode, where the greater part of their lives had been spent peacefully and inoffensively, to seek an asylum where they could; the few who remained prepared dinner for their guests in the great hall and in the apartments reserved for strangers, after which they brought them the keys, and desired them to take whatever they liked, . . . for they expected that every thing would be destroyed by the French.

Leiria forsaken.
Oct. 5.

Alcobaça forsaken by the monks.

CHAP. Means were afforded them, through General Mackinnon's kind-
 XXXII. ness, for saving some things which they could not otherwise have
 1810. removed ; and then the most venerable edifice in Portugal for its
October. antiquity, its history, its literary treasures, and the tombs which
 it contained, was abandoned to an invader who delighted in de-
 filing whatever was held sacred, and in destroying whatever a
 generous enemy, from the impulse of feeling and the sense of
 honour, would carefully have preserved.

*Surprise at
 Alcoentre.*

The rains now commenced, and set in with their accustomed severity in that country. By this time the infantry had reached their positions ; but the cavalry who covered the rear were exposed to the whole severity of the weather, bivouacking every night, because the enemy were so close that it would have been imprudent for them to occupy a village. Sir Stapleton Cotton, however, having reached the little town of Alcoentre, took up his quarters there : the French, expecting that in this heavy and incessant rain the English would apprehend no enterprise on their part, took advantage of the weather, and endeavoured to surprise him there ; his piquets were driven in ; and almost as soon as the alarm could be given, they were in the town, and in possession of six guns. A squadron from the 10th came down in time, charged them in the street, recovered the guns, and drove them to the other end of the town. Some severe skirmishing occurred on the following day, in which the 3d regiment of French hussars behaved most gallantly. At daybreak on the 10th the enemy had lost sight of the allies, and when they reached Moinho do Cubo, where the roads to Alenquer and Lisbon divide, they knew not which course to take. Two peasants were brought in by their detachments, and were asked which way the English had retreated, and where their lines were, . . . for by this time Massena had found cause to doubt whether a general who retreated so deliberately had no other intention than to

embark and fly as soon as he reached Lisbon. The men answered that they could give no information on either point, because they knew nothing; military punishment was immediately inflicted upon them, to extort what they were determined not to disclose, and they both endured it till they fainted, thus giving the French another proof of national resolution, and of the feeling of the Portuguese towards them. Being thus disappointed of the intelligence which they expected, the French vanguard, which consisted of 10,000 men, divided. The division which took the Alenquer road came in sight of a column of the allies on the heights beyond that town; on the following day this column retreated in good order to Sobral, and was driven out of it; the French were pursuing their advantage when a peasant fell into their hands, who, unlike his countrymen, answered without hesitation all the interrogatories which were put to him; he told the commander that they were close upon the British lines, and pointed out to him where the batteries were, in constructing which he had himself laboured. Had it not been for his warning, this body of the enemy would presently have been in a situation from which it could hardly have escaped. They halted instantly, and fell back: Massena was informed of the discovery which had been made; and three days elapsed before the invaders again approached the works of the allies so nearly.

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The French discover the lines of the allies.

Investigador Portuguez, t. vi. 64.

The army had commenced their retrograde movement from the frontiers with an impression that the cause wherein they were engaged had become hopeless, and that when they reached Lisbon they should be embarked, and abandon Portugal. This opinion had been altered by the course of events during the retreat, and by the manner in which that retreat had been conducted. There had been no alarm, no confusion, no precipitance upon the march. Nothing could have been conducted with greater ease to the troops; not a straggler had been taken, not a gun aban-

Feelings of the army.

CHAP. done, not an article of baggage lost; the infantry had never
 XXXII. even been seen by the enemy, except at Busaco, where they gave
 1810. them battle, and signally defeated them: and the cavalry had
October. taken on the way more prisoners from the enemy than the
 allies lost, a circumstance which probably never occurred in any
 former retreat. The troops, therefore, became confident that
 their commander had no thought of abandoning the contest;
 and that an embarkation was not his object, but that he was act-
 ing upon some settled plan, which he was well able to carry to
 the end. But when they entered the lines which they were to
 occupy, their surprise was hardly less than that of Massena and
 his army, at the foresight which they there saw displayed, and
 the skill with which a strong position had been rendered im-
 pregnable.

*The lines of
 Torres Ve-
 dras.*

At the close of the last century Sir Charles Stuart had per-
 ceived that, if the French should ever seriously attempt the con-
 quest of Portugal, here was the vantage ground of defence; and
 Lord Wellington, in his campaign against Junot, had observed this
 part of the country at leisure, and came to the same conclusion.
 Portugal, he said in the House of Commons, could be defended,
 but not on the frontier; the defence must be on the strong
 ground about Lisbon; and that consideration, he added, was in
 his mind when the Convention of Cintra was made. As soon,
 therefore, as the impossibility of co-operating with the Spaniards
 to any good effect had been fully proved, and it became ap-
 parent that the decisive struggle must be made in Portugal,
 upon this ground he resolved to make it. Early in the year it
 was stated in the English newspapers that men were employed
 in fortifying this position, but no mention of it had subse-
 quently appeared, and it is truly remarkable that works of
 such magnitude and importance should have been commenced
 and perfected without exciting the slightest attention during

their progress. They extended from Alhandra on the Tagus to the mouth of the little river Sizandro : the direct line across the country between these points is about six-and-twenty miles ; the line of defence was about forty. All roads which could have afforded any advantage to the enemy were destroyed, and others opened by which the allies might effect their communications with most facility. In some places streams were dammed and inundations formed ; in others the sides of the ravines and hills were scarped perpendicularly ; intrenchments were thrown up wherever they could be serviceable ; every approach was commanded by cannon, placed in posts which had been rendered inaccessible ; and at all the most important points redoubts were erected capable of resisting even if the enemy should establish themselves in their rear, and well provided with stores and ammunition for defence.

These works, the most celebrated of their kind, were constructed under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, of the engineers, assisted by Captain Chapman. Lieutenant-General Hill commanded on the right, having his head-quarters at Alhandra ; . . the great approach to Lisbon is on this side, but the ground is strong ; no means had been neglected for strengthening it, and gun-boats from the Tagus could assist in the defence. That river covered the right, the left was closed by the heights above Sobral, and communicated there with the corps of the centre. Major-General Picton commanded on the left ; his head-quarters were at Torres Vedras, a town which, being better known than any other included within the works, became for ever memorable in military history, by giving name to these formidable lines. The weakest part of the whole position was between Torres Vedras and the sea ; but the artificial defences were proportionately strong, . . and where it would otherwise have been most accessible, it was rendered most secure by inundations

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CHAP. extending some six miles along the Sizandro to the sea. The
 XXXII. centre extended from the heights of Sobral de Monte Agraço
 1810. to Torres Vedras: in the former little town Marshal Beresford
October. had his head-quarters; Lord Wellington's were about two leagues
 from the latter, at the Quinta de Pero Negro, near Enxara dos
 Cavalleiros. The heights above Sobral formed the principal
 point of defence on this part of the line; and the villages of
 Ordasqueyra and Runa, which are upon the road between Sobral
 and Torres Vedras, were also strongly fortified, because they
 commanded the only pass to the latter town within Monte Junto.
 That mountain, which runs due north from Runa for some four-
 teen miles, contributed mainly to the strength of the position.
 It prevented all military communication between Sobral and
 Torres Vedras, except by the line which the allies occupied in
 strength. Lord Wellington might be attacked either from the
 east by Sobral, or by Torres Vedras from the west; but he could
 bring his troops from the one point to the other in a few hours,
 along a safe and easy communication; whereas for the enemy to
 have communicated between the same points would have re-
 quired at least two days, for they must have rounded the Serra
 at its northern point.

In the rear of this line, and nearly parallel to it, at a distance
 of from six to eight miles, was a second fortified position, ex-
 tending from behind Alverca to Bucellas, thence along the Serras
 to Montachique, by the park wall of Mafra to Gradil, and so
 along the heights to the mouth of a little stream called S. Lo-
 renzo. Strong works covered the communication between these
 lines. And lest, contrary to all probabilities and human foresight,
 a position so fortified and occupied should be found untenable
 against the invaders, works were constructed at the mouth of the
 Tagus, at St. Julians, which would have secured the embarka-
 tion of the troops. The heights at Almada, on the south of the

Tagus, which command Lisbon and its anchorage, were also fortified, in case Mortier should carry into effect a co-operation on the side of Alentejo, which it was not doubted was part of the French plan. Ten thousand men, consisting in part of marines, were destined to serve in this quarter. The redoubts in the position were manned by Portuguese militia, who with a certain number of regular troops, were quite equal to the duties which might be there required. The troops of the line, British and Portuguese, were thus disposable to act in moveable columns, and oppose the enemy wherever they might attempt to penetrate. The allies were joined here by Romana with 6000 Spaniards, from Extremadura; here they might be efficiently employed, but in that quarter they could be of little service. Badajoz, which Romana had secured at the critical time, had now by his exertions been well provided and garrisoned, . . . and this junction had been arranged as soon as it became certain that the decisive stand must be made in the lines of Torres Vedras.

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*October.**Works at
Almcida.**Romana
joins the
allies at
Lisbon.*

The French had suffered severely from the weather during the latter days of their march, so that both horses and men were greatly exhausted when they arrived at the point where their advance was stopped. It was no easy task to reconnoitre these lines, many of the most important points being concealed behind the hills; but Massena, after a careful inspection, saw enough to convince him, that if he attacked them, a repulse might be expected, more fatal in its results than that which he had received at Busaco. And his hopes were not raised by the intelligence which now reached him of the consequences which that defeat had drawn after it. It was then perceived how great an error had been committed in not pursuing Colonel Trant beyond the Vouga, and dispersing the Portuguese militia under his command.

That officer, who well understood the weakness both of his

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*Colonel
Trant sur-
prises the
French in
Coimbra.*

forces and of his position, . . for the Vouga was at that time ford-able, . . had retreated by a night march to Oliveira, not without apprehension that the enemy would send a detachment against Porto, where they would have found no other troops to defend it than the small and ill disciplined body which he could have carried thither. When he had ascertained that this was not their purpose, but that the whole army was advancing in pursuit of Lord Wellington, and had left their wounded in Coimbra, he lost no time, but immediately concerted means for surprising them in that city. The Army of the North, as it was called, under Lieutenant-General Bacellar, consisted of three divisions of militia, . . that of Tras os Montes, under Silveira, that of the Minho, under Brigadier-General Miller, and that of Porto, under Trant. It had also two regiments of Portuguese cavalry and three brigades of field artillery, . . this constituted its whole force. When Trant was sent round by Porto to Sardam, the other divisions were disposed so as to close upon the enemy's rear ; and the advanced guard, under Colonel John Wilson, followed them through Vizeu, and along the lower falls of the Caramula, intercepting their communications and taking their stragglers. This body was near enough to see from a distance the action at Busaco ; and when Massena, withdrawing from thence, concentrated his army at Mortagoa, Colonel Wilson fell in with a detachment of his rear-guard, and in an affair of nearly equal numbers captured thirty mounted dragoons, and several infantry. As he proceeded he found the villages laid waste, and filled with the enemy's dead and dying ; and many of their wounded, falling into his hands, were committed to the surgeon's care, and saved from the death to which the invading army in its haste had abandoned them. With this officer, and with Brigadier-General Miller, Trant intended to combine his movements ; and having written to them, advanced from Oliveira

to Mealhada, expecting to join them there, . . but the country through which they came had been completely wasted, so that the want of supplies, and the exhausted state of the horses, rendered it impossible for them to advance so rapidly as he had hoped. Delay would give the enemy leisure to prepare for defence, whereas it was probable that at this time they had no apprehension of an attack, and were ignorant that any troops were so near them: Mealhada is scarcely twelve miles from Coimbra, and by a rapid movement Trant thought he might be able with his own division to effect what, if time were lost and the French on their guard, the united bodies might find it difficult to accomplish. He determined, therefore, to proceed. At a little distance from Os Fornos he fell in with an enemy's detachment, pushed on his cavalry so as to cut them off from Coimbra, and made them all prisoners, except a few who fell before the others surrendered. Then he ordered his horse to advance at a gallop along the principal road, cross the bridge over the Mondego, and take post on the Lisbon road, thus cutting off the communication between Massena's army and the garrison. While the cavalry were crossing, an irregular fire was kept up upon them from St. Clara's, a nunnery on the south of the river which the enemy occupied: as soon as the passage was effected, the French here proposed to capitulate; but Trant would hear of no capitulation, . . they must surrender at discretion, he said, and he would exert all his means to protect them from the people. The infantry meantime entered the city; and after a contest which continued about an hour, the French were made prisoners. Six or seven hundred convalescents thought themselves strong enough to defend the convent in which they were quartered, imprudently therefore they refused to surrender: the building was presently stormed, and most of them fell victims to Portuguese vengeance.

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*He escorts
his prisoners
to Porto.*

Colonel Trant found more difficulty in protecting the French than in taking them prisoners. The militia and armed peasantry under his command were exasperated almost to madness by the conduct of an enemy whose route from Pinhel might be traced by the smoke of burning villages. Coimbra itself presented a spectacle sufficient to excite the bitterest feelings of indignation. The French had ransacked every house, and church, and public building; they had for pure wantonness set fire to some of the houses, and they had heaped up promiscuously in the streets all the provisions which the army could not carry with it. Enough had been found in shops, and private houses, and in the convents of that populous and flourishing city, to have supplied the army for no inconsiderable time, if it had been collected in magazines: but Massena relied upon having the resources of Lisbon at his disposal; and the commissary-general, whom he had left as governor in Coimbra, however well he understood the importance of preserving the stores which had here fallen into his hands, was unable to restrain a soldiery, who from the commencement of the war had been permitted to indulge in licenses of every kind. About 800 of Trant's men were natives of Coimbra or its district; not a few of the inhabitants, upon the recovery of the city, appeared from their hiding-places: the enemy had been surprised and taken in the very act of havoc; and nothing but the greatest exertions on the part of Trant, and the respect with which he was regarded, could have saved the prisoners from the vengeance of those who, in addition to their strong national feeling, were under the sense of private and present injuries, and those of the deepest kind. For though the greater part of the population had taken flight, in so populous a city there had been many for whom flight was impossible, . . . age and sickness had detained some: others were bound by duty to the sick and aged; and others again, under the fear of casting themselves upon the

world as wanderers, and the hope that by remaining with their property they might preserve a part at least, had waited for the evil under their own roofs, or hesitated whither to fly, till it had been too late; and these unhappy persons had found no protection from the established laws of war, or the common usages of humanity. Under these circumstances there was no other means of preserving the prisoners but by marching them to Porto. Brigadier Miller and Colonel Wilson, who had formed a junction on the day that Trant's dispatches reached them, having pushed on with all speed to support him in his attempt, arrived at Coimbra a few hours after him. Leaving them therefore in the city with part of his brigade, with the other he convoyed 4000 of the French, going himself to protect them, as well knowing, that unless he were present, they would never reach Porto alive, . . for his men had been raised in that country, which was the scene of Soult's cruelties, and some of them were from that village of Arrifana, where horrors had been perpetrated of which the military murders committed under General Thomieres' orders were the least part.

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See p. 201.

Above 150 officers and 5000 men were made prisoners by this well-timed enterprise; 3500 muskets were taken, nearly the whole of which were charged; and hence the number of effective men may be estimated. A great number of kine and sheep were found, which the enemy had collected; had they crossed the Vouga they might have carried off from 2000 to 3000 head of cattle in one or two days' sweep of the country between that river and the Douro. In the commissariat, as well as in the hospital department, Massena suffered a loss here which was severely felt; the capture of his wounded under such circumstances was not more mortifying to him than the disappointment was painful of those hopes which he had founded upon the possession of Coimbra. Instead of having a garrison in that im-

*Difficulties
of Mas-
sena's si-
tuation.*

CHAP. XXXII. 1810. October. portant quarter, occupied in collecting for him the resources of a fertile country, and facilitating his intercourse with Spain, his communications were now impeded; he was cut off from Beira and the northern provinces; the Portuguese, encouraged by success, were acting in his rear, and in front there was a formidable force in a position, which he soon perceived it would be hopeless to attack. He had no other means of subsistence for his army than what might be procured by force, and any reinforcement must be strong enough to fight its way from the very frontier of France, for a small party could nowhere pass in safety. But the sea was open to the allies; . . . every day witnessed the arrival of supplies and stores in the Tagus, and it was reasonably to be expected that Lord Wellington would soon receive reinforcements enough for enabling him to act upon the offensive. Massena felt now the difficulties of the situation in which his own confidence and that of Buonaparte had placed him. But he manifested no sense of weakness; and having well reconnoitred the right of the lines, he placed his three corps separately in bivouac in front of it, and determined, but with due caution, to make at least a trial of that fortune which had never failed him till he was opposed to British enemies.

His demonstrations in front of the lines.

Early Campaigns, 191.

There was a redoubt in an important point of the position, at the foot of the heights above Sobral; opposite to this, at a little distance, the French established one, and Massena having strictly observed the ground, gave orders for attacking the British redoubt, and took his station on a hill to see the issue of this his first operation. The Honourable Colonel Cadogan of the 73d commanded there, and not only were the enemy repulsed, but their own redoubt was attacked, carried, and maintained. Convinced by the trial how little was to be hoped from any bolder measures, Massena ventured no farther. To cover his own plans, he still however maintained his position, and made such demon-

strations, that the allies were daily under arms before daylight, with their general-in-chief ready to direct their operations, expecting and hoping that a general attack might be made, and in full assurance that it could only end in the defeat and destruction of the enemy. But the French commander was not now so confident in his own troops, nor so ignorant of those to whom he was opposed, as to incur the danger of a defeat which must have been irreparable. The demonstration was made for the purpose of covering certain movements in his rear, and after a week of anxious and eager hope, the allies were convinced that no attempt would be made to force their inexpugnable position.

Having consulted with Marshal Ney, Regnier, Junot, and Montbrun, Massena determined upon sending to Buonaparte to request reinforcements, and taking a position in the interior of Portugal till they should arrive. As a preparatory measure, Montbrun was sent with the advanced guard, and with Loison's division to occupy Abrantes. Meantime he established his head-quarters at Alenquer, those of Regnier's corps were at Villa Franca, of Junot's opposite to Sobral, and of Ney's in front of Torres Vedras. Montbrun was detained two days at Santarem by an inundation of the Tagus, which covered the Campos de Golegam; as soon as the waters had retired, he advanced to Barquinha; that place, like Santarem, was deserted, but the inhabitants, relying too much upon protection from Abrantes, and from the river, had collected large magazines there, which they had now no time for removing. When he reached the Zezere, thinking to cross at Punhete, he found that the bridge of boats had been destroyed, and that a detachment from the garrison of Abrantes was entrenched in the town, which stands on the left bank. The Zezere is at all times a rapid and formidable stream; at that season it was nowhere fordable; the banks are high and difficult, and after consulting with the other generals, Montbrun

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Colonel
Jones's Ac-
count, i.308

Montbrun
sent against
Abrantes.

CHAP. determined to set the town on fire, that, under cover of the con-
 XXXII. flagration, he might throw a bridge across, and effect his passage:
 1810. this resolution was taken at night; in the morning it was found
October. that the allies had withdrawn; the river was then bridged with-
 out opposition, and the enemy advanced upon Abrantes. But
 that city was well provided against any sudden attack; and the
 French, perceiving that nothing was to be done there, retired to
 Punhete, and Barquinha, and Golegam. Montbrun's next orders
 were to take possession of Torres Novas and Thomar. Colonel
 Wilson had been instructed to proceed with his corps of militia
 towards these towns, for the purpose of confining the enemy's
 detachments on that side; but he, and Trant, and Miller, were
 charged always to keep in view the necessity of preserving their
 communication with the Lower Douro. Wilson, after the re-
 capture of Coimbra, had followed the enemy through Leiria,
 and afterwards occupied the road from Ponte de Murcella to
 Thomar. But this town had been taken possession of by Mont-
 brun, and there and at Torres Novas stores were found which
 relieved for a while the distress of the invaders, who depended
 for their subsistence entirely upon what they could find.

*The French
 army sub-
 sists by
 plunder.*

It was because Massena was too strong in numbers to be beaten
 without a greater expense of lives than Lord Wellington could then
 afford, that the British commander trusted to famine, and to that
 worrying system of national warfare which no army can withstand.
 Famine would soon and surely have compelled the invaders to re-
 treat if the orders of the Regency had been duly observed, and
 the country completely cleared of all stores before the enemy
 approached. But the local magistrates had not taken effectual
 measures for enforcing these orders; while the danger was at a
 distance, they had continued to hope it might be averted, or at
 least that it would not reach their particular districts; and in
 very many places the farmers had secreted their stores, that they

might not be constrained to sell them to the commissioners at a low price and at long credit. The precautionary measures of the government were so far carried into effect, that the enemy were severely distressed, and finally found it necessary to abandon their enterprise; but they were able to subsist some months upon what they found, for nothing escaped their search. The French soldiers had been so long accustomed to plunder, that they proceeded in their researches for booty of every kind upon a regular system. They were provided with tools for the work of pillage, and every piece of furniture in which places of concealment could be constructed they broke open from behind, so that no valuables could be hidden from them by any contrivance of that kind. Having satisfied themselves that nothing was secreted above ground, they proceeded to examine whether there was any new masonry, or if any part of the cellar or ground-floor had been disturbed: if it appeared uneven, they dug there: where there was no such indication, they poured water, and if it were absorbed in one place faster than another, there they broke the earth. There were men who at the first glance could pronounce whether any thing had been buried beneath the soil, and when they probed with an iron rod, or, in default of it, with sword or bayonet, it was found that they were seldom mistaken in their judgement. The habit of living by prey called forth, as in beasts, a faculty of discovering it: there was one soldier whose scent became so acute, that if he approached the place where wine had been concealed, he would go unerringly to the spot.

But before supplies could be brought in by this marauding system, the distress which was felt in the invading army occasioned a considerable desertion. The more desperate deserters, instead of going over to the British lines, collected in strong parties in the country about Alcobaça, Nazaré, and As Caldas da Rainha, and at length formed themselves into a regular army

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*Deserters
form them-
selves into
a corps of
plunderers.*

CHAP. of robbers, calling themselves the 11th corps, under their officers
 XXXII. and general. When they fell in with a detachment of their
 1810. countrymen, they compelled them to join with them, and in a
October. short time their numbers amounted to more than 1600. The
 annoyance became at length more serious to Massena than to
 the Portuguese; he sent two strong detachments against them,
 and it was not till after an obstinate action that they surrendered
 to a superior force, . . . their leaders were then shot, and the men
 returned to a course of duty which differed very little from their
 predatory life.

*State of
 Lisbon.*

There was necessarily great distress meantime at Lisbon, because so many families had taken refuge there in a state of destitution; but that distress was alleviated by the care of the government, and by a religion in which alms-giving ranks high in the scale of religious works, and is enjoined as a regular compensation for sin. Thousands of these poor fugitives were huddled in the open country; many were sent across the river, and they who came from those parts of the country which, by the recovery of Coimbra, were delivered from the French, returned home. Provisions were dear, but there was neither danger nor dread of famine. That country from which the capital receives all its garden produce was within the British lines; on the other side the river Alentejo and Algarve were free from the enemy; and the latter fertile province, with that part of the former which is considered as the granary of the south of Portugal, perfectly secure from them, unless the subjugation of the kingdom were effected. The Barbary coast was close at hand; ships from America and England were daily arriving, and the supply of wheat was soon fully equal to the consumption of the army and of the increased population.

*Opinions of
 the opposi-
 tion in Eng-
 land.*

But the opposition writers in England endeavoured to raise an alarm, "that Lisbon, not Massena, was in danger of famine;

he," they said, " could drive in upon our lines the population of the surrounding country to increase our difficulties, and to relieve his own could send his foraging parties into an immense track of country as yet untouched. England, meantime, must send out not merely regiment after regiment, but cargo after cargo of grain throughout the winter; and what if the bar of the Tagus should be locked up by adverse winds? Massena, we might be sure, with the talents and prudence universally ascribed to him, did not act without a confident prospect of success. It had been said in the Gazette, that he possessed only the ground on which his army stood; this was an *erratum*, where for Massena we ought to read Wellington. Our situation in Portugal would become infinitely more disagreeable than his, even if he did not, bringing his whole force to bear on one, two, or three points, by his superior numbers thus concentrated, break the lines in which Lord Wellington's army was so much drawn out. He would have the most productive part of the kingdom open to him; we should have only Lisbon and its vicinity, with the whole Portuguese army to maintain, as well as the British; nay, with the whole population of Lisbon, increased by the fugitives who had taken asylum there, deprived of their usual resources, and thrown upon us even for daily bread! What a delicate and irksome part then would our troops have to support, if they were to pass the winter upon those mountains, possessing no part of Portugal but that in which they were posted, incessantly harassed by the French in their front, with a Portuguese army double their own number within their lines, and a starving metropolis in the rear? The French had obviously the advantage; they could remain in their post as long or as short a time as they pleased: they could retire and return at their discretion. They might wait for the reinforcements which the despot their master would draw to their aid from every quarter of subjected

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CHAP. Europe: they were likely to accumulate, while the British must
 XXXII. in the nature of things decrease. Massena was in truth master
 1810. of the game he had to play. The most disastrous thing that
October. could happen to us, next to positive defeat, would be the necessity of keeping our position on these heights for the winter; and we trust," said these hopeful directors of public opinion, "we trust that we shall not have to incur that calamity! Lord Wellington may re-embark his troops without much molestation; and rather than he should be driven to the necessity of continuing in these positions for the winter, we confess, we wish that he were re-embarked."

*General La
 Croix killed*

The people of Lisbon had not been without some apprehension that the British government would withdraw, rather in hopelessness than in weakness, from the contest. The merchants, therefore, had prepared to take flight, some for Brazil, others for England. But when they saw with what determination the lines were manned, this apprehension was laid aside; the fullest confidence succeeded, and all persons relied upon the skill of Lord Wellington, the strength of his position, and the discipline and courage of the allied armies. Such was the security which they felt behind his impregnable lines, that parties resorted to Alhandra for the sake of seeing them, as idlers flock from London to behold a review. A battalion of British seamen had been formed to serve in defending that part of the position. Land service was a jubilee to these men; they had the town of Alhandra to themselves, the inhabitants having forsaken it, and there those who were off guard sat in large armed chairs of embossed leather, two centuries old, smoking and drinking in the open streets. In reconnoitring this part of the line from the side of Villa Franca, General La Croix was killed by a shot from the water. Frequent skirmishes took place on the right flank and in the rear of the French encampment; but the

piquets, by one of those agreements which mutual convenience will sometimes produce between enemies, did not fire upon each other, and this gave occasion for some of the old humanities of war. Some of our men even went and drank wine with the French, till an order was issued prohibiting a sort of intercourse which could neither with propriety nor safety be permitted.

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Certain movements of the enemy seemed at this time to indicate an intention of crossing the Tagus. Laborde was sent to garrison Santarem. He threatened to destroy the little town of Chamusca on the Alentejo side (noted for its sweet wine), if the boats there were not sent over for his use: upon which the inhabitants burnt them. A detachment advanced toward Villa Velha, in hopes of winning the bridge there, but it had been removed in time. Abrantes secured the passage against them at one practicable point; and Major-General Fane was sent into Alentejo to observe the enemy at Santarem, with a sufficient force to defeat any attempt that might be made in that quarter. Meantime Massena's apparent inactivity was regarded with some wonder, and made the subject of pasquinades in his own army. Sickness and desertion were daily reducing his numbers; his only possibility of success depended upon effecting a plan of co-operation with Soult; but time must elapse before that could be attempted, and without reinforcements he could not maintain his ground in Portugal the while. For these he had applied pressingly, and having determined where to await them, and prepared accordingly, after remaining a month in front of the British lines, he broke up from his bivouac on the night of the 14th of November, for the purpose of retiring into cantonments. The allies were immediately put in motion to follow him, but the movement was so ably conducted on the enemy's part, that not above 400 prisoners were taken during the retreat.

Massena retreats from the lines.

Lord Wellington, not knowing what might be Massena's

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*Lord Wel-
lington ad-
vances to
Santarem.*

intention, could not pursue him with his whole force; Picton's division was retained in its station, in case the enemy should move round Monte Junto for the purpose of making an attack on that side; and Hill was sent across the Tagus with his corps, to protect Alentejo, and communicate with Abrantes, if that place should be attacked. With the remainder of the army Lord Wellington followed the French, and came up with them near Santarem, where they occupied a position strong in itself, and rendered formidable by retrenchments and abbattis. It was where the high road, which is in that place a raised causeway walled on either side, crosses a wide morass, through which the Rio Mayor makes its way to the Tagus. The approach was defended by breast-works and trees cut down, and the causeway was commanded from a hill, close to its termination on the Santarem side, by artillery, which would have swept its whole length. Demonstrations for attacking them were made, rather to ascertain whether a retreat from the country were intended, than with any intent of assailing a position so well chosen and secured. Had this indeed been seriously designed, the heavy rain which fell during the night, and rendered the fords of the Rio Mayor impassable, must have frustrated it. Perceiving that the enemy were in considerable force there, instead of being, as had been at first supposed, only the rear-guard, and having ascertained that Massena's purpose was to canton his troops in the finest part of that country, Lord Wellington retained only his light division in front of Santarem, and cantoned the army at Cartaxo (where his head-quarters were fixed), Azambuja, Alcoentre, Alenquer, and Villa Franca, from whence they might at any time fall back within their lines, if the enemy should receive such reinforcements as might render this expedient. Massena's head-quarters were first at Santarem, but he soon removed them to Torres Novas: Regnier was left at Santarem with his corps; Junot's was

*Both armies
go into can-
tonments.*

cantoned at Pernes; Ney's at Thomar, Torres Novas, and Punhete; the companies of artificers at Barquinha, and a reserve of cavalry at Ourem. In this state both armies prepared to pass the winter, both expecting reinforcements, and each ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that circumstances might present.

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“If this,” said the despondents in England, “be termed the defence of a country, the Portuguese or any other people may well exclaim, God preserve us from such defenders!” “The campaign,” they predicted, “would be renewed in February, with such an accumulation of force on the part of the enemy, as must make the protection even of Lisbon hopeless, much less the deliverance of the Peninsula.” “They knew how galling it must be to the pride of the nation thus to be foiled, and thus, in expedition after expedition, to see the treasures and the blood of their countrymen squandered in vain; but if the public would give confidence to men of shallow intellects, . . . to men who, having no real stake in the country, submitted to execute the projects, however extravagant, of the Junta who had so long misguided us, . . . they must bear the calamity and disgrace of constant miscarriage. It was a most erroneous view of British policy, to conceive that we could ever, with our limited population and commercial habits, become a military people; and it would be just as rational for the French to strive to cope with us by sea, as for us to enter the lists with them by land. All that they now prayed for was, that our eyes might be at length opened to the true policy which we ought to pursue, that of retrieving our finances, and employing our resources upon objects truly British.” This was the language of the opposition, and it excited now for the first time the fears of the English public, because circumstances as melancholy as they were unforeseen seemed

CHAP. to render it probable that they would soon have it in their power
XXXII. to act upon the principles which they professed.

1810.

*The King's
illness.*

Toward the latter end of October the Princess Amelia died, after a protracted and painful illness, which she had endured with exemplary meekness and resignation. Aware of what must be its termination, she had some of her hair set in a ring, and one day when her blind father, making his daily visit, came to her bed-side, and held out his hand to her, she put this sad memorial upon his finger silently. Her dissolution occurred so soon afterwards, that she never knew the fatal consequences. The King had suffered intense anxiety during her illness, and when he felt this last indication of his daughter's love, feeling at the same time but too surely all that it implied, it affected him so strongly as to bring on the recurrence of a malady which had rendered the appointment of a regent necessary two-and-twenty years before. There was, however, good reason for hope, because the disease of mind was not constitutional and hereditary; they who had the best grounds for forming an opinion believed that its foundation was laid by extreme anxiety and consequent insomnience during the latter years of the American war. The physicians confidently expected that it would prove of short continuance, and therefore parliament having met according to summons, adjourned for a fortnight without a dissentient voice. At the expiration of that term a second adjournment for a similar time was proposed, upon the same grounds, and carried against a small minority: that time also having elapsed, a report of the privy council was laid before parliament, containing the examination of the King's physicians, all of whom declared it highly probable that he would recover. Upon this report the house adjourned for a third fortnight, but not without warm debate and a great increase of numbers to the minority. At the end of this

third adjournment ministers informed parliament that although a considerable degree of progressive amendment had taken place, and the same confident hopes of ultimate recovery were still entertained, yet the immediate state of his Majesty's health was not such as could warrant them to propose a farther adjournment. It became necessary, therefore, to deliberate in what manner a regency should be formed.

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During the subsequent proceedings, ministers were accused in the most vehement language of flagrant usurpation, and of grossly violating the constitution. They were called a parcel of second-rate lawyers and needy adventurers, who in their desperate ambition cared not for the fate of the nation, so they could only contrive to keep their places and retain the command of the public purse. Their proceedings, it was said, were miserable shams and pretences, tending to inflict a mortal stab upon the constitution of the country, and to vest the government in an oligarchical House of Commons. Mr. Perceval would fain persuade that house to make him governor of the country, and let him put the crown in his pocket. Parliament, therefore, was exhorted to withdraw from ministers as speedily as possible the power which they enjoyed, for the day of their dismissal, it was said, would be the best day England had ever seen. Among the evils which might be expected from the suspension of the executive power, it was urged that no assistance could be sent to Lord Wellington, no money drawn from the exchequer, however indispensable a supply might be at this time. Lord Holland dwelt upon this argument; to which Lord Liverpool replied, he was not aware of any injury to the public service from any such delay, nor that ministers had abstained from any acts, from which, under other circumstances, they would not have advised his Majesty to abstain. At whatever risk to themselves, he said, they would do that which they deemed most conducive to the safety, honour,

*Proceed-
ings con-
cerning a
regency.*

CHAP. and interest of the country, leaving it for the justice of parlia-
 XXXII. ment to consider of, and decide upon the grounds of their justi-
 1810. fication. This reply was not received as it ought to have been.
 December. Lord Holland made answer, it was highly proper that indemnity
 should follow statesman-like measures, called for by necessity ;
 but those who had assumed the functions of the executive power
 could not be entitled to indemnity for measures rendered ne-
 cessary by a delay which they themselves had caused. And the
 Duke of Norfolk observed in the same tone, that if no incon-
 venience had resulted from the suspension of the executive
 power, then had ministers in effect taken the sovereignty into
 their own hands.

*Mr. Per-
ceval.*

Upon this subject Mr. Perceval spoke with characteristic
 manliness. “ We have not,” said he, “ been blind to these
 things. If ministers should find it necessary to take such steps,
 they would be justified under the particular circumstances of the
 case ; but they would act under a heavy responsibility, and par-
 liament would be bound in duty to examine their conduct after-
 wards. I am deeply convinced, that I stand in a situation of
 as deep responsibility as ever a minister stood in ; a double re-
 sponsibility, a responsibility to the public, and a responsibility
 to the King my master. I feel this to be our situation ; and par-
 liament must have felt it so too, in suffering the delays that have
 already taken place. Gentlemen opposite may put what con-
 struction they please upon what I am about to say ; but I do
 contend boldly before parliament, and before my country, that
 if, under these circumstances, any measure, in any of the public
 departments, required the sign manual, the officer at the head of
 that department would act most culpably if he did not issue the
 necessary orders to his inferior upon his responsibility. This is
 the view I have of the situation and of the duties of his Majesty’s
 ministers ; and although gentlemen on the other side have

thought proper to insinuate that our measures have been influenced by a desire of retaining our offices, I am sure the house will not be of opinion that our situation is particularly enviable, or one that could by any possibility be an object of choice. We feel... we admit... all the inconvenience of the present state of things; but, considering the duration to be but short, are they in any degree equal to the inconvenience of appointing another person to execute the functions of the sovereign; or, in other words, of appointing a regent, unless the necessity of the case absolutely requires it? It is not from feelings of delicacy only that his Majesty's ministers have acted, but from the conviction that the preserving to his Majesty the power of exercising his authority immediately upon his recovery, without the interruption of a regent, would be a great national advantage. The regent, when appointed, would of course act as he thought best for the interests of the state; and even admitting that the plans which he would adopt would be better than those now pursued, yet I contend, that this change from a bad to a better system, with the probability of again shortly recurring to the old system, would be much more injurious to the welfare of the public, than the inconveniences which have been so strongly urged by the gentlemen on the other side of the house.

“ The delay which has taken place has been no covert delay: it has been perfectly open, and the reason why it was asked was fairly stated. We have had no disguise, no subterfuge; our object was broadly and fairly stated to parliament. Sir, I say again, that ministers feel deeply the heavy responsibility of their situation: they know that their conduct will necessarily be examined and scrutinized by parliament; they know that they may have to request justice from parliament for their conduct, at a time when those who are now censuring their conduct with so much acrimony may possess a greater sway than they do at

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CHAP. present. Is such a situation, then, a desirable one? Is it an
 XXXII. object of ambition? Is it possible that any man, or set of men,
 1810. can covet such a situation, or wish to retain it, except from the
 December. imperious sense of the duty which they owe to their sovereign
 and to their country? That duty I will perform to the best of
 my humble abilities, and cheerfully submit my conduct to the
 justice of parliament and of my country.

“It has been asked, whether, if under the present circumstances, the evacuation of Portugal were deemed necessary, any order could be sent out to Lord Wellington for that purpose? And do gentlemen really believe that any difficulty exists upon such a subject? Do they really believe that Lord Wellington would refuse to obey an order transmitted to him, by his Majesty’s secretary of state, for that purpose, merely because he had heard of the King’s indisposition? Undoubtedly they do not: the case they have put is then an imaginary one. . . Sir, in the office which I have the honour to hold, money must be taken out of the Exchequer for the public service; it is the bounden duty of ministers to see that service performed; and do the honourable gentlemen opposite think that I would hesitate to draw the money for that purpose?” . . At this a loud cry of Hear! hear! was raised from the opposition benches. . . “Sir,” pursued Mr. Perceval, “I am unable to account for the distinction which the gentlemen opposite appear to me to make between the two cases which I have put. When I said that ministers would not hesitate to give orders for the evacuation of Portugal, if it were deemed necessary, they seemed, by their silence at least, to acquiesce in what I said; but when I spoke of applying the money voted for the public service to the public service, they affect great astonishment, as if the principle of the two cases was not the same. But do they think that where money has been voted by parliament, and ordered by parliament to be applied to a parti-

cular service, that I would hesitate to have that public service performed, for fear of the responsibility that would attach to me? Do they think that I would endanger the best interests of the country, from any consideration of personal danger to myself? Do they think that I would risk a mutiny in the army or the navy, rather than take upon me the responsibility of issuing their pay? No, sir, if I could be guilty of such conduct, I should be unfit indeed for the situation which I hold! I should be guilty of a base dereliction of my duty to my sovereign and my country!"

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This was no empty language; and however the manly appeal might be lost upon those persons to whom it was immediately addressed, it was not lost upon the people of England. The ministers, with a spirit which alone might be sufficient to atone for all their errors, and entitle them to the lasting gratitude of these kingdoms, had ordered off reinforcements to Lord Wellington, on their own responsibility, at a crisis when they held their power by so precarious a tenure, that it was not unlikely their successors' orders for the evacuation of Portugal might be upon the seas at the same time. For that this was the policy which the opposition intended to pursue, if, as they now fully expected, they were to be invested with power, was what they themselves avowed. Issues of money also became necessary for the army and navy: money had been appropriated by parliament for these services; but the exchequer act requires that the issue should be under the great seal, or under the privy seal, or by authority of an act of parliament. Mr. Perceval thought that under the existing circumstances it would be proper to use the privy seal: the keeper of the privy seal was willing to take upon himself this responsibility; but the signature of Mr. Larpent, clerk of the privy seal, was likewise necessary, and that gentleman refused to affix it, pleading scruples on account of his oath of office.

*Troops sent
to Portugal.*

*Issues of
money re-
quired.*

CHAP. Mr. Perceval upon this issued an order from the Treasury to the
 XXXII. Exchequer, deeming this sufficient, and thinking also that it was
 1811. better for the responsible servants of the crown to risk the cen-
January. sure, or wait the indemnity of parliament, than to procrastinate
 public business, by bringing such topics into discussion in the
 Jan. 1. house from time to time. But when these warrants were brought
 to Lord Grenville, in his capacity of Auditor of the Exchequer,
Conduct of he returned an answer to Mr. Perceval, requiring time "to con-
Lord Gren-
ville as Au-
ditor of the
Exchequer. sider the nature and extent of the duties which this new and un-
 expected course of proceeding imposed upon him;" and there-
 fore requesting to know when it was necessary that the money
 should be issued. He was informed, "that, according to the
 usual course of supplying the weekly issues to the navy and
 army, it would be necessary that sums should be issued for both
 services, beyond the amount of the existing credit at the ex-
 chequer, either on the morrow, or the next day at farthest; but
 if an actual issue could be made within six days, no serious in-
 convenience was apprehended." Lord Grenville then desired
 that the opinions of the Attorney and Solicitor General should
 be taken. These law officers pronounced, that they "did not
 think the warrant of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury"
 was in law a sufficient authority imperative upon the Auditor,
 nor, consequently, a legal sanction for his proceeding to obey
 the same; nor that any discretion was left to him by the law on
 this occasion, for the exercise of which he would not be re-
 sponsible." The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury trans-
 mitted this opinion to Lord Grenville, informing him at the
 same time "that their sense of the mischief to the public service,
 which would arise if any delay should take place, appeared to
 render it indispensable that the warrants should be forthwith
 complied with, and that they were consequently ready to take
 upon themselves the responsibility of any act which might be

essential for that purpose." Lord Grenville replied, that it was matter of the deepest concern to him to be made the involuntary cause of any, even the shortest delay, in an issue of his Majesty's treasury, stated to him from such high authority to be important to the public service. "If," said he, "I could be satisfied of the propriety of my doing what is required, there is no personal responsibility which I would not readily incur for the public interests; but I cannot persuade myself, that I could obey those warrants, without a breach of my official duty in that point, which is above all others peculiarly obligatory on the person placed in the situation of Auditor of the Exchequer; nor without a high and criminal violation both of a positive statute, and also of the essential principles of our monarchical and parliamentary constitution.

"I am told," he continued, "that I must act on my own discretion, for the exercise of which I must alone be responsible. This responsibility, if it legally attaches upon me, I certainly cannot transfer to any other persons, and least of all to your lordships, whatever willingness you have expressed to take it on yourselves. My attempting to do so would itself be criminal; tending to confound the official relations in which I have the honour to stand towards your lordships, and to annul those checks which the law has established for ensuring the faithful discharge of our respective duties, and thereby the security of the public treasure. But I beg leave humbly to submit to your lordships, that the law has in truth invested me with no discretion on this subject. The exigencies of the public service, which your lordships have condescended to detail to me in these your warrants, are matters of state, of which, as Auditor of the Exchequer, I have no knowledge, and can take no cognizance; my official duty is strictly limited to an observance of the accustomed forms of the exchequer, and of the laws which have from

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CHAP. time to time been passed for its regulation. To these I am
 XXXII. bound to adhere; and it is on the fullest consideration which
 1811. this pressure of time has permitted me to give them, that I am
January. compelled to decline, but with all due respect to your lordships,
 a compliance with the requisition contained in those warrants, to
 which this letter refers." His lordship concluded, by recom-
 mending that the difficulty should be submitted to the considera-
 tion of the two houses of parliament, with whom rested the right
 and duty to provide the means of removing it, and to whose
 pleasure he would defer with entire submission.

Jan. 3. Mr. Perceval immediately laid this correspondence before
 parliament, saying, "that, though, if it had not been for the
 difficulty thus unexpectedly started, he should not have thought
 it expedient to bring the subject under their immediate notice,
 yet he had always anticipated it as his duty to submit it to their
 consideration, not for the purpose of obtaining a previous vote
 of indemnity, but, having incurred the responsibility of action,
 with the view of calling on the house to determine whether or
 not ministers had acted justifiably." He now moved a resolution,
 that the Lords of the Treasury should issue their warrants for
 the payment of such sums as were necessary, and that the Audi-
 tors and officers of the Exchequer should obey those warrants.
 In the course of the debate he noticed the argument, that public
 inconvenience was now proved to have arisen from the delay
 occasioned by adjournments. "We have," said he, "this
 marked, monstrous, abominable, and aggravated case before us,
 . . and what is it? what is this great public inconvenience? Why,
 that ministers have found it necessary to come to parliament to
 authorize the issue of money, for services for which that very
 money has been appointed!"

The resolution passed without a division; but, in the Upper
 House, twenty Peers, among whom were all the royal Dukes, pro-

tested against it; because, they said, the principle on which it was founded would justify the assumption of all the executive power of the crown by the two houses of parliament, during any suspension of the personal exercise of the royal authority. This business attracted more notice than it otherwise would have done, because, upon Lord Grenville's accession to the first place in the ministry after the death of Mr. Pitt, a bill had been passed, empowering him to hold at the same time the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Auditor of the Exchequer; offices which, it was argued in support of the bill, might without inconvenience be held by the same person. The imprudence of bringing thus to recollection a measure, which at the time had called forth strong animadversions, did not tend to lessen the unpopularity of Lord Grenville and the coalition with which he acted.

That party fully expected their return to power. They were strong in borough influence, while Mr. Perceval, owing to the course which he pursued concerning the regency, lost the support of those members of the royal family who had been most closely connected with their father's government. Their journalists were numerous and active, and they depended upon the Prince's favour. But though all the various sects and subdivisions of opposition had united in one cry against the King's ministers, there were too many points of difference between them to be easily accommodated. On the question of what is insidiously termed catholic emancipation they were agreed; but only on that question: the Grenvilles were at variance with all their allies upon the subject of parliamentary reform, and the reformists were at variance among themselves as to the nature and extent of their purposed reformation. The war also was another ground of dissension. One party would have sacrificed our allies, our interest, and our honour, for the sake of obtaining vile popularity, by concluding a nominal and deceit-

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*State of the
opposition.*

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ful peace. They saw no difficulty in accommodating our differences with all our enemies; according to them, their country was in the wrong upon every disputed point; we had therefore only to concede every thing to America, and suffer Buonaparte, without farther opposition, to govern Spain and Portugal in his own way: then we might have illuminations for a definitive treaty, transparencies of Peace and Plenty, and quatern loaves and pewter pots carried in jubilant procession, in honour of the reduced prices of bread and porter. This would have been the foreign policy of the radical reformers; that of Lord Grenville and the despondents would have been equally ruinous; believing it impossible that we could resist the military power of France, and yet knowing that peace would be only a snare, they would have carried on a timid defensive war, without the hope or the possibility of bringing it to a glorious termination. Lord Holland, on the contrary, would have acted with additional vigour in aid of Spain; in this he would have been supported by Earl Moira and Mr. Sheridan, and perhaps by the Marquis of Lansdowne and Mr. Ponsonby.

Their expectations.

The hopes, however, of the opposition were raised to the highest pitch, and their partizans scarcely even attempted to conceal their joy at an event, which, as they fully expected, was to restore them to their places. The disposition of the Prince was well known to be favourable to these hopes: he had a personal regard for some of the leaders of the party, and it was believed that many of his political opinions had been imbibed from Mr. Fox. It was therefore probable that a change of ministry would take place; and all the opponents of government, however greatly they differed among themselves as to their ultimate objects, from the regular opposition, under Lords Grey and Grenville, down to the very dregs of the revolutionary faction, vied with each other in exulting over a falling enemy.

Two years before the King's illness, one of their journalists had said, that "of all monarchs, since the revolution, the successor of George III. would have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular." This sentence, connected as it was with the anticipation of "a crowd of blessings that might be bestowed upon the country, in the event of a total change of system," had unwisely been selected for prosecution by Sir Vicary Gibbs, and the defendants were of course acquitted. Such language was perfectly consistent in the Foxites; but in the mouths of the anarchists, the flattery which was now used toward the Prince appeared not a little extraordinary. "Never," they said, "was there so fair an opportunity for producing a great and salutary effect, as the Prince now had. We want a change of the whole system, a radical and a sweeping change of it; and it is because we hope that such a change would be the consequence of giving full powers to the Prince, that we wish to see full powers given to him. Is not the Prince of Wales as likely to be able to judge of political systems as his father, . . . afflicted as the latter unhappily has been in more ways than one, and bent down with age as he now is? Is not the Prince as likely to be able to choose proper advisers as his father was, or ever can be? Why then should powers, of any sort, belonging to the kingly office, be withheld from him? I know it has been said, that we are *bidding* for the Prince; and who can bid above us? We have to offer him *hearts*, and *sinews*, and *lives*, if he needs them, and we ask for nothing but our well-known rights in return. We want to strip him of nothing. We grudge him and his family nothing that the constitution awards them, or that they could ever wish for, in the way of splendour. All we have to beseech of him is, that he will resolve to be the ruler of a free people, and not the leader of a faction." . . . "His succession to power," we were told by another of these journalists, "with such

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Language
of the
anarchists.

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opportunities before him, and at so momentous a time, appeared a lot so enviable, that it might turn philosophy itself into ambition. Hitherto he had been seated in that domestic privacy, which he had learnt how to value and dignify. And so wonderfully had past circumstances held back the cause of radical reform, and so favourable for it were the present, that Fate seemed purposely to have reserved the amiable task for his royal highness, that with one restoring breath he might melt away the accumulated oppressions of half a century."

The wishes of this party concerning the King's resumption of authority were sufficiently expressed. They told us, it was exposing the government to the contempt of foreign powers, to have a person at the head of affairs who had long been incapable of signing his name to a document, without some one to guide his hand; a person long incapable of receiving petitions, of even holding a levee, or discharging the most ordinary functions of his office; and now, too, afflicted with this mental malady! They cited cases to show how doubtful and precarious were the appearances of recovery from mental derangement; observed that persons having been so afflicted were easily hurried, and inferred that a man subject to hurries was not fit to wield the executive power. When they were charged by their opponents with thus disclosing a determination, that if they acceded to power the King should never resume his functions, the manner in which the charge was repelled was such as confirmed it. "Every one," they said, "expresses regret that the King, or that any other human being, should be afflicted with blindness. But old age is old age, and blindness is blindness, in a King as well as in other men; and when blindness is unhappily added to old age, and to both are added *mental derangement*, is it unreasonable that people, whose happiness or misery must, in a great degree, depend upon their government, should be solicitous that *great*

caution should be used in the resumption of the royal authority, by a person thus afflicted?" . . . "Throw him into a corner!" exclaimed a ministerial writer, when he exposed with indignation the wishes of this party; "tell him, this is the lot reserved for a king who has reigned so long!" The reply to this was any thing rather than a confutation or denial of the charge. "We have had nothing to do with the *lot*," said a mouthpiece of the anarchists; "we have had no hand in making the King either old or blind, or mentally deranged. The *lot* has fallen upon him. The first is the lot of every man, and is generally esteemed a very fortunate lot; the second is nothing very rare, and it is by no means an unfrequent companion of old age; and the third, and all three, are the work of nature, and not of any of us. And as to the King's having reigned so long, there is neither merit nor demerit in that, either in him or his people."

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Whether the agitators and anarchists really believed that the Prince could be so infatuated as to countenance their plans for a radical and sweeping change, . . . or whether they held out this hope to their dupes and disciples, in order that their certain disappointment might engender a deadlier disaffection, is best known to themselves: but if, abstaining from their indecent attempts to show that the King ought never to be permitted to resume his authority, they had talked of no other reform than that of curtailing the power of what they called the borough-mongering faction, there never was a time when the better part of the people would have been so well inclined to listen to their arguments. Mr. Perceval had never stood so high in public estimation as at this moment. When first he came into power, the tide of popularity was in favour of him and his colleagues; because any men would have been popular who succeeded to the administration which was then displaced; but a series of untoward events had for a time lessened his hold upon the

Mr. Perceval
popular
at this time.

CHAP. country, without in any degree diminishing the general dislike
XXXII. with which his opponents were regarded. The unhappy ex-
pedition to Walcheren drew after it a cry of grief and disap-
1811. pointment, against which, perhaps, he could scarcely have borne
January. up, if Sir Francis Burdett, by a factious dispute with the House
of Commons, had not, most unintentionally, but most effectually,
drawn off the public attention at the very moment when the
decision upon the inquiry came on. It was always asserted by
his enemies, that he held his situation, not through any weight
of influence in the country, nor of talents in parliament, but
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that nothing could be more unfit than that the British prime
minister should be thus dependent upon, and literally, as it were,
the servant of the crown. They who argued thus against Mr.
Perceval's administration did not perceive how strong an argu-
ment they supplied against that system, to which they them-
selves owed their only power; certain, however, it is, that
Mr. Perceval was thought a weak minister, because he wanted
that influence; and a sense of this weakness seems sometimes to
have made him assent to measures which he would gladly have
prevented, if he had held his situation by a stronger tenure.
But when the prop upon which he really had leaned, and by
which it was believed that he was entirely supported, was sud-
denly taken away, then it was that he felt his own resources,
and the people saw him confident in his motives and measures,
and with the strength of integrity hold on his steady course;
not to be deterred from what he knew to be his duty, either by
the clamours and threats of the faction within doors, and the
demagogues without; nor by the expressed displeasure of the
Prince, in whose power it would presently be to dismiss him from
office. Then, perhaps for the first time, he became conscious of
his own powers, and the dignity of his nature shone forth; it

was seen that the man, whose individual character was without a spot, carried the pure principles of his privacy into public action, and possessed the steadiness and intrepidity of a statesman in as eminent a degree as the milder and most endearing virtues of domestic life. Mr. Perceval never held so high a place in public opinion as the favoured minister of the King, in full and secure possession of power, as now, when he was only the faithful servant of a master who was no longer sensible of his services, and no longer capable of supporting him.

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Accustomed as the various members of opposition were to coalitions, and compromises, and concessions, it was no easy task to form a coherent ministry out of such heterogeneous elements. At the very commencement of the arrangements, Lords Grey and Grenville could not accord, and the Earl left town in disgust; they found it, however, expedient to agree, and he returned in time to give counsel when the Prince had to answer the proposed restrictions sent to him by parliament. It is said that the answer which these lords had advised was shown by the Prince to Mr. Sheridan, and that Mr. Sheridan declared it would prove of the most pernicious consequences, inasmuch as it could hardly fail to involve the Prince in a dispute with the House of Commons. This opinion was followed, and the answer which was delivered was composed according to Mr. Sheridan's counsel. The two leading opposition lords were offended at this, and intimated, that as his Royal Highness had not deemed it proper to adopt their advice, they could not be of any service to him in the intended arrangement. The Prince upon this requested Lord Holland to form an administration; but Lord Holland had no influence, and was utterly unable to ensure majorities. The Prince, therefore, who now began to feel the difficulties of government, was driven back to Lords Grey and Grenville, and a temporary conciliation took place. The triumph

*Schemes
for a new
ministry.*

CHAP. of the opposition seemed now to be complete ; they thought the
 XXXII. field was their own, and that nothing remained but to distribute
 1811. the spoils. This distribution, however, excited claims and con-
 February. tentions, of which the Prince heard more than he liked.

*The King's
 opinion
 during an
 interval of
 amendment.*

When the time of the regency drew near, Mr. Perceval waited on the King at Windsor, and found him well enough to converse upon public affairs, though not sufficiently recovered to bear the weight of business. He inquired anxiously concerning the Prince's conduct, and expressed great joy at finding that he had not thrown himself entirely into the hands of a party who were directly hostile to all the measures of his father's government ; and he desired that the Queen would write to the Prince, to signify this approbation, and to request that he might not be harassed on his return to society by having to change an ephemeral administration. The Prince, it is said, was well pleased to be thus relieved from the difficulties in which he found himself involved by jarring opinions and contending claims. He made known his determination of making no change to the opposition ; and on the day before the regency bill passed, he officially acquainted Mr. Perceval that it was his intention not to remove from their stations those whom he found there as the King's official servants. " At the same time," said he, " the Prince owes it to the truth and sincerity of character, which, he trusts, will appear in every action of his life, explicitly to declare, that the impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father leads him to dread that any act of the Regent might, in the smallest degree, have the effect of interfering with the progress of his Sovereign's recovery. This consideration alone dictates the decision now communicated to Mr. Perceval. Having thus performed an act of indispensable duty, from a just sense of what is due to his own consistency and honour, the Prince has only to add, that, among the many blessings to be

*The Prince
 Regent an-
 nounces his
 intention of
 making no
 change.*

Feb. 4.

derived from his Majesty's restoration to health, and to the personal exercise of his royal functions, it will not, in the Prince's estimation, be the least, that that most fortunate event will at once rescue him from a situation of unexampled embarrassment, and put an end to a state of affairs ill calculated, he fears, to sustain the interests of the united kingdom in this awful and perilous crisis, and most difficult to be reconciled to the genuine principles of the British constitution."

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Mr. Perceval replied, that, in the expression of the Prince's anxiety for the speedy restoration of his father's health, he and his colleagues could see nothing but additional motives for their most anxious exertions to give satisfaction to his Royal Highness, in the only manner in which it could be given, by endeavouring to promote his views for the security and happiness of the country. "Mr. Perceval," he continued, "has never failed to regret the impression of your Royal Highness with regard to the provisions of the regency bill, which his Majesty's servants felt it to be their duty to recommend to parliament. But he ventures to submit to your Royal Highness, that, whatever difficulties the present awful crisis of the country and the world may create in the administration of the executive government, your Royal Highness will not find them in any degree increased by the temporary suspension of the exercise of those branches of the royal prerogative which has been introduced by parliament, in conformity to what was intended on a former similar occasion; and that whatever ministers your Royal Highness might think proper to employ, would find in that full support and countenance, which, as long as they were honoured with your Royal Highness's commands, they would feel confident they would continue to enjoy, ample and sufficient means for enabling your Royal Highness effectually to maintain the great and important interests of the united kingdom. And Mr. Perceval humbly trusts, that, what-

Mr. Perceval's reply.

CHAP. ever doubts your Royal Highness may entertain with respect to
XXXII. the constitutional propriety of the measures which have been
1811. adopted, your Royal Highness will feel assured, that they could
February. not have been recommended by his Majesty's servants, nor sanctioned by parliament, but upon the sincere, though possibly erroneous, conviction, that they in no degree trenched upon the true principles and spirit of the constitution."

The opposition had made so sure of coming into power, that they let the list of their intended arrangement get abroad; "an arrangement," they told us, "of one united, compact body of men, all holding the same principles, and all animated by the same views; and an administration," they added, "of more internal strength, by the ties of mutual friendship, . . of more public influence, by talents, integrity, and stake in the country, never had been submitted to any Prince." A meeting of the common council was called by their city partizans, to prepare an address of congratulation to the Regent upon the change of men and measures which he was about to make. Their disappointment was in proportion to their hopes; they affirmed, however, that the Prince's determination would be received with real satisfaction by the friends of Lords Grey and Grenville, who must all feel that nothing but a sense of imperious duty could have induced them to undertake the irksome and arduous task of office in such times. "Three months," they said, "had already elapsed under a total suspension of the functions of government, . . three months the most important, perhaps, that had ever occurred in our history; another month must have been added to the delay, if the Prince had yielded to his patriotic sentiments, and recurred all at once to the principles upon which he thought the administration would be most beneficially conducted. Thus much time must have been required for the re-election of those who would have vacated their seats, and for

the re-establishment of the routine of office ; but this delay might certainly, in a moment of such emergency, be productive of the most serious evil." But while the Whigs thus affected the language of resignation, the radical journalists declared, " that a ministry formed by the two joint opposition lords would have excluded almost all the Prince's friends ; that from those lords the people could have expected nothing ; but that they would have hoped for something from an arrangement that should have placed Lord Holland at the head of affairs, to the great mortification of those less popular and less liberal leaders. It was as well to retain Perceval and Liverpool, as to supersede them by Grey and Grenville." Whigs and anarchists, however, both agreed in asserting, that the Prince had no confidence whatever in his ministers. " He signs papers," said one of these journalists, " receives addresses, expresses his opinions respecting courts martial and criminal, and has ten or a dozen people to walk before him ; but with regard to the nation, he can only wish its prosperity, and has no more to do with its government than a keeper of geese."

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But the great and quiet majority of the nation regarded the Prince Regent's determination with grateful joy : they anticipated, from the wisdom and feeling which dictated it, a perseverance in the true course of policy and honour, and in that anticipation looked on to a triumphant issue of the war, with a hope which from thenceforward suffered no abatement.

BIBLIOTHECA
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the clamours and threats of the faction within doors, and the
demagogues without; nor by the expressed displeasure of the
Prince, in whose power it would presently be to dismiss him from
office. Then, perhaps for the first time, he became conscious of
his own powers, and the dignity of his nature shone forth; it

was seen that the man, whose individual character was without a spot, carried the pure principles of his privacy into public action, and possessed the steadiness and intrepidity of a statesman in as eminent a degree as the milder and most endearing virtues of domestic life. Mr. Perceval never held so high a place in public opinion as the favoured minister of the King, in full and secure possession of power, as now, when he was only the faithful servant of a master who was no longer sensible of his services, and no longer capable of supporting him.

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Accustomed as the various members of opposition were to coalitions, and compromises, and concessions, it was no easy task to form a coherent ministry out of such heterogeneous elements. At the very commencement of the arrangements, Lords Grey and Grenville could not accord, and the Earl left town in disgust; they found it, however, expedient to agree, and he returned in time to give counsel when the Prince had to answer the proposed restrictions sent to him by parliament. It is said that the answer which these lords had advised was shown by the Prince to Mr. Sheridan, and that Mr. Sheridan declared it would prove of the most pernicious consequences, inasmuch as it could hardly fail to involve the Prince in a dispute with the House of Commons. This opinion was followed, and the answer which was delivered was composed according to Mr. Sheridan's counsel. The two leading opposition lords were offended at this, and intimated, that as his Royal Highness had not deemed it proper to adopt their advice, they could not be of any service to him in the intended arrangement. The Prince upon this requested Lord Holland to form an administration; but Lord Holland had no influence, and was utterly unable to ensure majorities. The Prince, therefore, who now began to feel the difficulties of government, was driven back to Lords Grey and Grenville, and a temporary conciliation took place. The triumph

*Schemes
for a new
ministry.*

CHAP. of the opposition seemed now to be complete ; they thought the
 XXXII. field was their own, and that nothing remained but to distribute
 1811. the spoils. This distribution, however, excited claims and con-
 February. tentions, of which the Prince heard more than he liked.

*The King's
 opinion
 during an
 interval of
 amendment.*

*The Prince
 Regent an-
 nounces his
 intention of
 making no
 change.*

Feb. 4.

When the time of the regency drew near, Mr. Perceval waited on the King at Windsor, and found him well enough to converse upon public affairs, though not sufficiently recovered to bear the weight of business. He inquired anxiously concerning the Prince's conduct, and expressed great joy at finding that he had not thrown himself entirely into the hands of a party who were directly hostile to all the measures of his father's government ; and he desired that the Queen would write to the Prince, to signify this approbation, and to request that he might not be harassed on his return to society by having to change an ephemeral administration. The Prince, it is said, was well pleased to be thus relieved from the difficulties in which he found himself involved by jarring opinions and contending claims. He made known his determination of making no change to the opposition ; and on the day before the regency bill passed, he officially acquainted Mr. Perceval that it was his intention not to remove from their stations those whom he found there as the King's official servants. " At the same time," said he, " the Prince owes it to the truth and sincerity of character, which, he trusts, will appear in every action of his life, explicitly to declare, that the impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father leads him to dread that any act of the Regent might, in the smallest degree, have the effect of interfering with the progress of his Sovereign's recovery. This consideration alone dictates the decision now communicated to Mr. Perceval. Having thus performed an act of indispensable duty, from a just sense of what is due to his own consistency and honour, the Prince has only to add, that, among the many blessings to be

derived from his Majesty's restoration to health, and to the personal exercise of his royal functions, it will not, in the Prince's estimation, be the least, that that most fortunate event will at once rescue him from a situation of unexampled embarrassment, and put an end to a state of affairs ill calculated, he fears, to sustain the interests of the united kingdom in this awful and perilous crisis, and most difficult to be reconciled to the genuine principles of the British constitution."

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Mr. Perceval replied, that, in the expression of the Prince's anxiety for the speedy restoration of his father's health, he and his colleagues could see nothing but additional motives for their most anxious exertions to give satisfaction to his Royal Highness, in the only manner in which it could be given, by endeavouring to promote his views for the security and happiness of the country. "Mr. Perceval," he continued, "has never failed to regret the impression of your Royal Highness with regard to the provisions of the regency bill, which his Majesty's servants felt it to be their duty to recommend to parliament. But he ventures to submit to your Royal Highness, that, whatever difficulties the present awful crisis of the country and the world may create in the administration of the executive government, your Royal Highness will not find them in any degree increased by the temporary suspension of the exercise of those branches of the royal prerogative which has been introduced by parliament, in conformity to what was intended on a former similar occasion; and that whatever ministers your Royal Highness might think proper to employ, would find in that full support and countenance, which, as long as they were honoured with your Royal Highness's commands, they would feel confident they would continue to enjoy, ample and sufficient means for enabling your Royal Highness effectually to maintain the great and important interests of the united kingdom. And Mr. Perceval humbly trusts, that, what-

Mr. Perceval's reply.

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ever doubts your Royal Highness may entertain with respect to the constitutional propriety of the measures which have been adopted, your Royal Highness will feel assured, that they could not have been recommended by his Majesty's servants, nor sanctioned by parliament, but upon the sincere, though possibly erroneous, conviction, that they in no degree trenched upon the true principles and spirit of the constitution."

The opposition had made so sure of coming into power, that they let the list of their intended arrangement get abroad; "an arrangement," they told us, "of one united, compact body of men, all holding the same principles, and all animated by the same views; and an administration," they added, "of more internal strength, by the ties of mutual friendship, . . of more public influence, by talents, integrity, and stake in the country, never had been submitted to any Prince." A meeting of the common council was called by their city partizans, to prepare an address of congratulation to the Regent upon the change of men and measures which he was about to make. Their disappointment was in proportion to their hopes; they affirmed, however, that the Prince's determination would be received with real satisfaction by the friends of Lords Grey and Grenville, who must all feel that nothing but a sense of imperious duty could have induced them to undertake the irksome and arduous task of office in such times. "Three months," they said, "had already elapsed under a total suspension of the functions of government, . . three months the most important, perhaps, that had ever occurred in our history; another month must have been added to the delay, if the Prince had yielded to his patriotic sentiments, and recurred all at once to the principles upon which he thought the administration would be most beneficially conducted. Thus much time must have been required for the re-election of those who would have vacated their seats, and for

the re-establishment of the routine of office ; but this delay might certainly, in a moment of such emergency, be productive of the most serious evil." But while the Whigs thus affected the language of resignation, the radical journalists declared, " that a ministry formed by the two joint opposition lords would have excluded almost all the Prince's friends ; that from those lords the people could have expected nothing ; but that they would have hoped for something from an arrangement that should have placed Lord Holland at the head of affairs, to the great mortification of those less popular and less liberal leaders. It was as well to retain Perceval and Liverpool, as to supersede them by Grey and Grenville." Whigs and anarchists, however, both agreed in asserting, that the Prince had no confidence whatever in his ministers. " He signs papers," said one of these journalists, " receives addresses, expresses his opinions respecting courts martial and criminal, and has ten or a dozen people to walk before him ; but with regard to the nation, he can only wish its prosperity, and has no more to do with its government than a keeper of geese."

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But the great and quiet majority of the nation regarded the Prince Regent's determination with grateful joy : they anticipated, from the wisdom and feeling which dictated it, a perseverance in the true course of policy and honour, and in that anticipation looked on to a triumphant issue of the war, with a hope which from thenceforward suffered no abatement.

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